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THE RIVER JORDAN.

BY REV. W. W. PATTON.

WHEN the Israelites, after Moses had died and Joshua had assumed the command, sought to enter the promised land, they found in their front the river Jordan. Every river is to a large army a formidable obstacle; especially if the passage be disputed by the enemy in force. The degree of danger will depend upon the breadth, the depth, and the swiftness of the water, and the steepness of the banks. The Jordan, in volume of water, and in rapidity of current, was a river which no prudent general could despise. Except in the dry season there were but few points at which it could be forded, and these would admit of the passage of only small detachments at a time. We learn from the subsequent history, that when an army had crossed it for purposes of invasion a defeat was destruction, with these narrow fords in the rear as the only chance of escape. Thus, when Ehud led the Israelites in their successful attempt to throw off the yoke of Moab, the narrative reads (Judges 3: 28, 29): "And he said unto them, Follow after me, for the Lord hath delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand. And they went down after him and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over. And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valor; and there escaped not a man." Gideon pursued the same course at the defeat of the Midianites, who had crossed over from the eastern side. He "sent messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan" (7: 24). And similarly in the civil conflict between the Israelites east and west of the river, under Jepthah (12: 4–6, the Gileadites seized the fords, and slaughtered forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites. These fords were principally at three points, near the Sea of Galilee, near the Dead Sea, and about halfway between, where the Syrians recrossed after the sudden raising of the siege of Samaria (2 Kings 7: 15). And these were useless, when the spring-floods, caused by the melting of the snow on the Anti-Lebanon and other ranges, filled the channel to the level of the ordinary banks, and even overflowed the plateau to the base of the second set of banks. The Canaanites must have relied largely on the Jordan to delay the invasion of the Israelites under Joshua,

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as it was the season of flood (Joshua 3: 15; 4:18). Had they known the plans of Joshua, and gathered in force on the western bank, they might have defied the invaders, so far as merely human resources went. A miracle was actually wrought to open a passage for the hosts of Israel; the necessity of such a divine intervention being as obvious as in the crossing of the Red Sea. The moral effect, also, was of immense importance in heartening the Israelites and in discouraging the nations of Canaan.

As the Jordan is frequently coming into notice in the Scripture narrative, it is desirable to have a clear conception of its geographical position and physical peculiarities. It formed the eastern boundary of the promised land, in its limited acceptation; for Joshua said: "Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth you." Two and a half tribes had received special permission to occupy conquered territory on the east of the river. It was therefore a noted landmark, being, like the Rhine in Europe, a natural boundary. In addition to the features which the principal river of a land always has, in giving life to the scenery and direction to the activities of the people, and in serving as a military defence, the Jordan has entirely unique characteristics. In common with but few other streams, it is entirely inland. The waters never reach the ocean, although flowing nearly their entire course within forty or fifty miles of the Mediterranean. They empty into the Dead Sea, with no outlet beyond; as streams do into the Caspian, the Sea of Aral, and the Salt Lake in Utah. But to this rare characteristic the Jordan adds the unparalleled fact of running below the surface of the ocean, in a deep chasm rent mysteriously in the crust of the earth. This is true from the point where its headwaters from various sources unite and flow into the little lake Huleh, to where the historic river loses itself finally in the bitter waves of the Dead Sea. As each 500 feet above or below the sea-level is considered to make a difference in climate equal to one degree of latitude, this deep depression of the Jordan valley between the parallel ranges of mountains—a valley now known as the Ghor—has an almost tropical heat. Palms and the fruits proper to the hot regions flourished abundantly in ancient times, as Josephus informs us; Jericho was known as "the city of palms," Deut. 34:3. The traveler at the present day, as soon as he descends into that sunken region, is made oppressively aware of the power of the sun's rays, especially as reflected from the neighboring cliffs. Under this influence the river ran in the lower part of its course, in the Hebrew days, through a broad fertile plain, which was like a garden, (see Gen. 13:10,) though dividing a wilder region above.

The name Jordan means, in Hebrew, "The Descender," and its special pertinence was not understood until of late by the reader of Scripture. Every river descends in passing from its sources among the hills to the shore of the ocean. But the Jordan is emphatically "The Descender," for its most elevated source, the fountain near Hasbeiya, is 1700 feet *above* the Mediterranean, and its north-eastern fountain at Banias, is 1140 feet above the sea, while the Dead Sea, into which it empties, is 1317 feet *below* the Mediterranean. Thus it actually descends 3017 feet in the one case, and 2457 in the other, in a comparatively short course. For, take the map and measure the distance in a straight line between Bainas and the Dead Sea, and it will be found not to exceed ninety miles. This would give a little over 27 feet of fall to every mile of its direct southern course. The waters necessarily dash down a succession of rapids, and form everywhere a stream of unusual swiftness. These facts had been lost to the knowledge of the civilized world, and were discovered in 1847 by the British Lieut. Molyneux, and in 1848 by the American Lieut. Lynch, each of whom made a perilous expedition

down the Jordan in a boat, meeting with many disasters. They were thoroughly convinced that, though the tortuousness of the course multiplied the miles and divided the fall, the old Israelites understood their river when they bestowed its name. Lieut. Lynch found that the Jordan was so sinuous, that, in accomplishing the 60 miles between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea it actually ran 200 miles. But as it fell 650 feet between these points, there was still an average descent of three feet to each mile of channel. Of course, no commerce found a path along such a river, and no large cities grew up on its banks. Jericho was six miles distant. The only boat which seems to have floated on its troubled surface was a ferryboat, in which David crossed on his return to Jerusalem after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion. 2 Sam. 19:18.

The Jordan has three principal sources, each of which the writer has been permitted to visit. The highest and most distant is on the flanks of Anti-Lebanon, where a stone dam collects the waters of springs and of a small rivulet, which flows off amid blooming oleanders, under the name of the Hasbany. A more noted source is at Cæsarea-Philippi, now Banias, fifteen or twenty miles to the southeast, near which the transfiguration scene appears to have occurred on "a high mountain," one of the spurs of Hermon. A cave opens into the bottom of a cliff, in which Josephus says was a pool and the source of the Jordan; but the cave is now dry, and is used for a sheep-fold, and the stream gushes copiously out from the base of a heap of rocks in front of it. The water is pure and cold, and runs swiftly off among wretched huts and extensive ruins. The third and most copious source is at ancient Dan, now Tell el Kadi, which is a hill shaped like a crater. Within the hollow, and also at the bottom without, the water rushes forth in great quantity, forms a pool, and flows away with a rapid current. The three streams unite a few miles below and the complete Jordan is formed, which soon loses itself in an immense marsh and cane-brake, extending several miles, impenetrable to man, but the resort of wild buffaloes, panthers, bears and other beasts, while Arabs pitch their black hair-cloth tents along the margin. In this hot, malarious swamp flourishes the tall papyrus, formerly abundant in Egypt, but no longer found there, growing directly in the water. The river, emerging, broadens into a charming lake, anciently known as "the waters of Merom" (Joshua 9:5), but now called Lake Huleh, shallow, pear-shaped, and about four miles long by three miles broad, by the side of which the writer spent a night, in a mingled fear of plundering Arabs and stinging scorpions, the latter appearing in numbers on the cloth of the tents as well as on the ground. At the place of issue the Jordan was but eighty feet wide, and soon narrowed down to fifty feet. The lake is eighteen feet lower than the Mediterranean, and here the strange chasm begins, which only terminates below the Dead Sea. The writer followed the river several miles, to the bridge by which the Damascus road crosses, after which it dashes precipitously into wild glens, and runs a course of about ten miles from Huleh to the sea of Galilee, in whose broad and deep waters it for a time disappears. At the southern end, thirteen miles away, it resumes its course. Here the writer, in the month of November, bathed in it, and waded across just below the ruins of an ancient bridge. At that dry season it was but forty feet wide, and the waters rose only to the shoulders. The valley to the south was broad and beautiful. For sixty miles further it dashes along the ever deepening chasm, till the Dead Sea receives its waters. Near it the writer again visited the river, and found a turbid and swift current, fifteen feet below the top of the banks, along which was a thicket of trees and canes, where wild animals hide. Of old the lion had his covert there, and was driven out in a

rage by "the swelling of Jordan" (Jer. 49: 19). The second set of banks are a few rods back, and rise fifteen or twenty feet higher. Thence a gravelly plain extends to the mountains. In this region Elijah and Elisha miraculously crossed (2 Kings 2: 7, 8, 13, 14), and John the Baptist prosecuted his ministry and baptized Jesus (Matt. 5: 6, 13–17). A little further up, at the middle fords, humbled Naaman probably bathed when he was cleansed from his leprosy. Rendered sacred as the border of the promised land, this peculiar stream has become to us the symbol of death, and we sing:

"On Jordan's rugged banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
To Canaan's fair and promised land,
Where my possessions lie."

SCRIPTURE STUDY.

BY REV. W. A. NICHOLS.

THIS subject, seemingly trite, has an importance which fully vindicates its appearance here. The rationalist, relying upon science as his guiding light, sees no need of miracles, and treats them as a violence to the general harmony, overlooking the more serious fact that sin was here before miracles, and so acting as a disturbing force as to break down the ladder of communication between heaven and earth. And so the aid of miracles is required to repair the breach, by setting forth Christ as the way up again to the Father of mercies. Whatever may have been the form and seal of a divine revelation to sinless beings, it is clear that to the human race, with wills perverse and understandings darkened, nothing less than a revelation substantiated by miracles could be the practical medium of God's teaching. However perfect the working of providence to supply all minor wants, the Divine hand must appear outside upon the dial plate in sufficient frequency to indicate the source of the work and the character of the invisible worker. Surely a revelation so needful that the recipients will constantly grope in the dark and certainly go astray without it —a revelation so difficult to communicate and so readily disbelieved that miracles must be wrought to substantiate it, must be essential to the welfare of those for whom it was made. Hence, the truths conveyed must be considered not only reliable, but such in quality that no unauthorized substitute can take their place. It follows, also, with equal clearness, that such a revelation contains nothing superfluous, and omits nothing which is essential to its completeness; so, as stated of the book of Revelation, nothing may be added to it, nothing taken from it. The least real deviation, therefore, is a violence—a loss. The greater the deviation the more serious the loss, until, in the progress of the departure, the result becomes fatal. Hence the importance of a careful and thorough study of the Bible, and the responsibility of the expositor.

The primary work of exposition is to ascertain the true intent of the inspired passage under consideration. What did the Holy Spirit mean to convey through the human writer, in this passage of the sacred writings? When one has ascertained this, he has, for himself, done in the premises the work of exposition. But the Sabbath-school teacher must be prepared to do for a class what he has first done for himself. One must thoroughly know, himself, what he would teach another, and then bear in mind that nothing is really taught which is not actually communicated, and nothing is really communicated until it is intelligently received. Here commences the second part of expository work, not less

important, and with many, equally difficult with the first. So to set forth the meaning of the text, which the teacher comprehends, that the pupils shall fully comprehend it also, is often no easy achievement. In the process, variety of statement, bringing in turn all sides of the subject to the front, elucidation by other passages where substantially the same meaning is more obvious, and illustrations of every form, from every available source, are all legitimate; and happy is the teacher who has a capacity well adapted and furnished with select materials for this purpose. It does not follow with certainty because one has talked glibly on a point for ten minutes, that he has communicated valuable thoughts to a corresponding extent.

The last, and not least important, in the work of the expository teacher is, so to make application of the truth communicated, to individual wants for personal benefit, that the spirit shall pass from the letter through the understanding to the heart. A passage of Scripture so expounded and enforced, will ever after be to the pupils the opened casket, containing jewels—opened to them, perhaps, for the first time, yet so opened, it may be, that its contents can never again be closed to those who have received from it priceless value. There may be other thoughts than those contained in the Scripture assigned, which one could present with less study, and perhaps more show; but if through lack of interest or insufficient study one has consciously failed to reach the marrow of the passage, and so dilates upon some other topic as a substitute, he can hardly avoid the charge of disrespect to the Revealing Spirit, while the selected truth which he should have drawn and applied, may, to the pupils, remain hid in the letter, as the sword concealed in the scabbard.

The passage appointed for a given hour offers a special privilege and claims a corresponding attention. It becomes, for the time, a focus for thought, inviting elucidation from every available source, and the more intense the concentration upon it the better. Looking up from the sacred page into the face of the expositor, its meaning and application beseechingly ask to come forth through his instrumentality. The promised Spirit is waiting to guide into the truth and to bring to remembrance by way of suggestion. But in all these respects the Spirit helps only those who strive to help themselves. He can not guide successfully those who make little or no effort to advance.

It is not enough that some one or more *topics* be selected from the entire lesson as the subject of general discourse, to the neglect of verbal exegesis. This may be good, popular preaching, and valuable in its place, but it may not be a substitute for exposition; since, while a single topic receives lengthened discourse, several rich mines of truth, requiring the expositor to open them, will remain concealed. The work of the Sabbath-school teacher is not popular preaching to a class, but incisive exposition, with brief, yet direct application. If there is time for no more, a single verse clearly explained and directly applied is more valuable than a rambling talk over an entire paragraph, though the former is as much more difficult to achieve as it is more valuable when done. Perhaps hardly anything is more harmful in this work than to run loosely over Scripture, trampling it down instead of gathering the contents.

The sentiments thus far expressed are more than corroborated by the words of Jehovah to his people entering the promised land. Josh. 1:8. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein."

Touching the *methods* for a successful study of the Bible, ordinarily, the most obvious meaning has the presumption in its favor. But this meaning may be modified by the general drift of the context, and a decision is unsafe till this has

been carefully considered. The meaning of the passage may receive complexion from the peculiarities of the writer. The consideration whether the passage is prose or poetry, figurative language or a literal translation, will often vary the significance of an expression. King David in the Psalms, St. Paul in the Romans, and the apostle John in his epistles, use words with such variation that one must consider the character of the writer and the object of the writing in order to determine the meaning of each author. Not infrequently the geography of the place, the time of the year, the government of the country, the employment and habits of the people, one or all will modify the text, or serve to determine its true meaning. As each portion of revealed truth must be consistent with every other, when an exposition gives a sentiment which is positively at variance with the general teaching of the Scriptures, there must have been an error in the process; either some true source of elucidation has been omitted or something superfluous introduced, and a re-investigation is due. When one truth comes to touch, but not overlap another which borders it, it has found its true limitation in that direction. Free will and divine purpose were never intended to neutralize each other in turn. When evidence for and against a proposed interpretation seems too evenly balanced to render decision easy, a careful notice of minor circumstances will often clearly settle the question, as the smallest straws readily show the direction of the current. To put one's self as nearly as possible in the place of the writer, to so enter into his sympathies as to think his thoughts and appreciate his motives, is a valuable help to see one's way through a difficult passage. Taking this position, as it were, inside the text, clues for a safe direction which are not seen from a superficial view will often appear, disclosing also the choicest deposits of the text.

A cordial sympathy with the Revealing Spirit, begetting an ardent desire to know the truth for the sake of putting it in practice, is the state of mind best adapted to lead the student to correct conclusions; since, "if any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine" —its source and character. The most delicate detector of the spiritually false is an abiding love of the true.

After all, the student of the Bible will find apparent discrepancies in the text, which faithful study and a willing mind can not fully reconcile, even when aided by all the helps which the present stage of Biblical literature can furnish. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," but the original Scriptures have been many times transcribed and translated, and it is not claimed that either the transcribers or translators were infallible. Errors in chronology, errors in copy, and errors in translation are more than possible. Interpolations by imperfect men, with the hope to improve the original text, may have crept in along the ages; and yet not one, not all of these possibilities will lead the ingenuous student to doubt respecting the Bible as a whole. Many scholars above the range of ordinary Sabbath-school teachers, with clear intellects and honest hearts, are pushing investigation where light is most hopeful to solve the difficulties. The forthcoming translation by the best Christian scholars of the English-speaking tongue is an earnest of improvement upon the accepted version. Exploring companies and excavating detachments are leaving no stone unturned to find what the buried monuments of antiquity may contribute of light upon the inspired text. With such prospects, the trusting student, using all available helps, will do the best he can. As for the rest which remains unsolved, he is to wait, and still working, watch in the most hopeful direction for coming light, believing that what he may not live to see the church of Christ will know hereafter.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

GOD'S CONSTANCY AND HUMAN COURAGE.

BY REV. S. GILBERT.

THE first grand fact which strikes one in studying the career of Joshua is, the place which "a good courage" holds in all successful achievements. And the second is, that the strength of good courage springs from the thought of God in the immutable constancy of his help.

Alas, for the heart that has lost its courage! There are none poorer than he who has become dispirited. The sun itself looks dark to the hopeless. A person void of courage is an object for pity. He feels wretched, and is so. The one thing that is most certain about him is that he will fail. So many, so steep and rugged, so obstinate are the difficulties inevitably in the way of every soul that comes into this world, and stays here long, that he can never do the thing that he is set to doing, without courage. A strong heart is as needful as strength of hand. The coward heart soon wilts to the ground. There is abroad among the churches of our time, a growing spirit of courage; but with twice the courage, the Christian church would have twice its present power. If courage is a quality of the heart which springs from some great truth, what is this truth, or fact, that has been neglected?

The uniformity of nature's laws is a fact which the scientists are never weary of expatiating upon. Nor would we have them tire of it. It is fully as interesting and important a fact as they suppose it to be. Perhaps even more so. All things considered, it must be admitted, the human race, as a whole, has displayed a marvelous amount of courage. Amid and almost underneath the almost infinitely manifold changefulness and unreliability of phenominal things, they have seen and felt that there is something which doth live and stay. This solid continuance of nature's hidden forces and inherent laws has been something to "tie to." It furnished a basis of calculation—was something that could be depended upon. Hence confidence, expectancy, hope, courage. Nothing scatters to naught one's courage sooner than to be plunged into uncertainties.

But, over against this great fact of nature's uniformity, is to be seen and more worthily recognized, the glorious truth of the Divine *constancy*. This is a personal fact, or truth, which has ministered unspeakable comfort and courage to all right-minded men everywhere, the steadfastness of nature's grand procedures, being, in reality, but the bright shadow of God's constancy, projected across the face of the material universe. The one answers to the other; and both are needed to keep man's truest courage up.

Now, in sacred history, Joshua is the man who stands forth as the pre-eminent representative of the courageous temper. He is the "Mr. Great-Heart" of the Old Testament. The word which the Lord spoke to him at the beginning of his great career of popular leadership and conquest exactly describes his character and epitomizes his life: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, I will be with thee; *I will not fail thee nor forsake thee:* be strong and of a good courage!"

As was Moses the hero of the Exodus, so was Joshua, the hero of the Conquest, fully persuaded that the Lord was with him, and that he was changeless and would *never* fail him. This made him a man most simple, upright, straightforward, undaunted. Though called to cope with the greatest difficulties and dangers, from the earliest notices we

have of him to the latest, from the battle with the Amalekites to his wonderful farewell-address to his nation, he appears like one who bore in his heart the continual "sense of victory and success." There is nothing that succeeds like success, say the French. The inward conviction and assurance of success is, of course, what they mean. He had the habit of expecting success. He had the habit of succeeding. He was often placed in emergencies; but never wavered. He was never afraid, never dismayed. His courage always rose with the occasion.

No doubt, he was naturally brave-hearted. Perhaps it may be said that he had a real genius for high-hearted courage. But what was the secret inspiration of such glorious intrepidity? It certainly was not mere daring, or the spirit of adventure; nor was it mere confidence in himself. It was the absolute confidence, the vivid consciousness, which he kept; or, rather, which so steadfastly kept him, that *God was with him, and would never fail him.* If he had a genius for courage, it was primarily because he had, and cherished, the genius for belief—belief that the Lord, who had stood by Moses and carried him through all emergencies, would abide also with him. "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will never leave *thee*, nor forsake thee."

This thought of the living God—so constant, so continuously helpful—spoken deeply in the heart, is what is most fitted to inspire it. "Fear not; I am with thee," are the ringing words of divine cheer, sounding in the ear of our dispirited humanity, which echo through almost every book in the Bible, from, especially, the book of Joshua, the story of the conquest of the Promised Land, to the book of Revelation, which celebrates the foreseen victories of the hindered and harrassed, yet triumphing church, the conquests of the Lamb. So that we may boldly say: The Lord is my helper, of whom shall I be afraid?

A grand part of the exceptional success of such men as Luther, Whitefield, Wesley, Nettleton, Finney, Hammond, Moody, and men of that sort, who bring to pass such remarkable results, is the exceptional character of their confidence in this constancy of God. When they look back and see what the Holy Spirit *has* done, they set to the seal of their faith that such things he still can do—Jesus the same yesterday, *to-day*, and forever. For the needless lack of this sense of victory and success, a thousand forms of Christian enterprise are pushed or coaxed in a spiritless way, and signs of defeat prevail where there might just as well be the buoyant and rhythmic tramp of continuous victory.

It is wrong when one rests the fulfillment of his grandest aims upon the mere strength of his own purpose, or promise. It is the constancy of God's promised help that we are to build upon. Multitudes, even now "in the valley of decision," are pondeiing the great question. The Christian life seems attractive, because of its evident rightness, reasonableness, goodness. They are on the brink of the great decision, seemingly at the very point of choosing actually to enter and go forward. It is with them a time of inexpressible suspense. Why do they not make the great, the infinitely safe venture, turn and go on? There is a "lion in the way;" it is some fear, a fear that they can not hold out. They have not yet taken fully hold of the great truth of the Saviour's constancy, as well as present or past love. If they had, it would sweetly and completely get possession of them, so that they could not but "adventure the whole weight of their souls" upon him. Increase the spiritual courage of the teachers in our Sunday-schools, and their power for good will, in like manner, be increased. What God was, that he is, and that he will be. His love is permanent, his pity constant, his presence unfailing. Fear not; I am with thee!

The history of the church, so far as

true to its privilege and its mission, is penetrated through and through with divine history. And the militant church catches the victory with its eye, always, when it most completely accepts the constancy of the divine character and co-operation. Other dynasties may change and pass away; His never. Other friendships may prove variable; with Him there will be no variableness, nor shadow of turning. The word which He speaks is a word to be believed. He can be depended upon—a companionable Deity, a very present help, the very thought of whose presence would give heart and high hope to the lowliest. It is not without reason that the prayer-book introduces every now and then in its litany, as a kind of hope-inspiring undertone, the sweet old refrain: "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end!"

THE LAW OF THE TEST AND CONFIRMATION.

BY REV. J. M. GREGORY, LL. D., REGENT ILLINOIS INDUSTRIAL UNIVERSITY.

"*The Test and Confirmation of teaching must be made by repetitions and reviews.*"

WE suppose the work of teaching to be finished. The teacher and the pupil have met. Language freighted with ideas has been uttered and interpreted. Knowledge, the rich treasure of truth, has passed into the mind of the learner, and it lies there in greater or less completeness to feed thought, to guide action, and to shape character. But what eye shall penetrate the learner's understanding to determine the clearness and accuracy of his cognitions, and to nurse into permanent force the ideas he has been led to conceive? Let it be remembered that ideas are not substantive things which may lie in the mind as coins lie in a box or safe. They are mental acts which can gather strength, precision, and ease only in so far as they approach the condition of habits. And is it not then evident that there is a supplementary work to be done even after the teaching act proper has been finished? It is for this supplementary work that our seventh and last law provides.

Expressed as a precept in the teaching art, we have given the law this emphatic form:

"Review, *Review*, REVIEW, carefully, thoroughly, repeatedly, with fresh thought and consideration." It would be difficult to overstate the value and importance of reviews. No time in education is spent more profitably than that spent in reviewing. Other things being equal, he is the best and most successful teacher who secures from his class the most frequent, thorough, and interesting reviews.

A review is something more than a repetition. A machine may repeat a process, but only an intelligent agent can review it. The repetition done by a machine is a second movement precisely like the first; that of the mind is the re-thinking of a thought, and it involves fresh conceptions, new associations, and an increase of facility and power.

Reviews are of different grades of completeness and thoroughness, from the rapid glance thrown back to catch a general view of the ground gone over, or the mere repetition of the words of by-gone lessons, to the most careful re-survey of the whole field—the occupancy in full force of the ground of which the first study was only a reconnoissance.

The value, as well as the real character of a true review, will appear from a more careful consideration of its philosophy.

I. A new lesson or subject never

reveals all its truth to a first study. Its novelties dazzle the mind and distract the attention. When we enter a strange house we know not where to look for its several apartments, and the attention is drawn to a few of the more singular and novel articles. We must return again and again, and survey the scene with eyes grown familiar to the place and light, before the plan of the building and the furniture and uses of all the rooms will stand clearly revealed. So one must return again and again to a book if he wishes to see it clearly and completely. We have all noticed how much that is new and interesting we find in reading again some old and familiar volume. Especially is this true of the Bible, of which the latest study is always the richest and best. Thus a true review ever adds something to the knowledge of the pupil.

II. At every review we survey the lesson from a different point of view. Time has passed. We come with a different aim or feeling, and bring with us the light of new knowledge. When one climbs a mountain, each opening and outlook may be upon the same landscape, but the observer's position is changed, and each view is grander, more comprehensive and complete.

III. Human thought does not often attain its victories at a single blow. Its conquests are won by repeated struggles "on the same line," by flank-movements, by marches, battles, and sieges. Or, rather, like an artist, it sketches at first only outlines and detached parts of its pictures, and only after many returns to each part does it attain the finishing touches of the brush.

IV. The memory requires repetitions as the essential condition to the retentive holding and ready use of its treasures. Each review establishes new associations and familiarizes the old. The lesson that is studied but once is learned only to be forgotten. That which is thoroughly and repeatedly reviewed is woven into the very fabric of our settled opinions and beliefs.

V. Finally, if our object is not merely to know but to have knowledge for use —to possess it fully like coin for daily commerce, or like tools and materials for work, then must we above all use frequent and thorough reviews, till the mind attains a firm hold, and a free handling of the truth. Or if we desire to make the truth bear with a strong and plastic force upon conduct and character we must return to it so often that it will at last rise up in mind as readily as a dictate of conscience, and fling its light upon every purpose with which it is concerned.

It will be remarked that the review has two main uses: 1st, to perfect knowledge; 2nd, to confirm and preserve knowledge. It also has a third use scarcely less important, namely, to render our knowledge ready and useful.

It must also be remembered that the review is not simply an added excellency in teaching which may be dispensed with if time is lacking; but it is one of the seven essential conditions of true teaching. Not to review is to leave the work incomplete and evanescent in character. The law of review rests upon the universal and unchangeable laws of mind. It may not always be done formally and with clear design, but no successful teaching was ever done in which the review did not take place—the revisiting and repetition of the ideas in a lesson fully learned.

In the Bible more than in any other book are reviews needful and valuable. For not only does the Bible most require and most richly repay repeated study; but most of all ought Bible knowledge to be familiar to us. Its great truths ought to dwell in the heart and in the conscience as a sacred presence; its very language should haunt the memory as the melody of sweetest songs. Its words and texts should rest clear and precise in the thoughts as the very alphabet of all clear revelation and faith. Its grand and divine doctrines, its august and vital precepts, its blessed promises, its sublime histories and still sublimer

prophecies ought to inhabit the mind as heavenly guests. It is that part of the Bible which thus lives within us, not the great volume that lies upon the table or shelf, which is the true word of God to us — the bread of our Godward life.

Reviews may be partial or complete. A partial review may embrace a single lesson, or several lessons, but not the whole course; or without regard to lessons it may include a single branch of the subject — the development of a single doctrine or truth, or the actions or character of some one individual; or, finally, it may be used to recall and fix some one difficult point or question. The complete review may be a general but cursory reviewing of the entire field gone over, comprehended in a few general questions, or it may be a full and final re-study of the whole subject. It is evident that each of these has its place in the work of teaching, and the true teacher will know when to use them all.

RULES.—Among the many practical rules and methods for reviews the following are some of the most useful:

1. *Count reviews as always in order.* Whenever a spare moment occurs, while the school or class are coming to order, or are waiting for a change in the exercises, or whenever either the teacher or the class are unprepared to do anything else, a review may go on.

2. Have also set times for reviews. At the opening of each lesson there should be a brief review of the preceding lesson, in order that the two may be put in proper connection, and no breaks may be left in the subject or the teaching. So also, at the close of each lesson, a backward glance should be given to gather in mind the exact points learned and to be remembered.

3. Whenever in the progress of the lesson a reference can be usefully made to something learned in former lessons the opportunity should be seized to bring forward into fresh light and new connections the old knowledge. In this way the old and new will naturally help each other, and all the acquisitions will be woven into firm and systematic relations.

4. After five or six lessons are passed it is well to begin and review from the beginning, the substance of two lessons being taken each day — not in place of the advance, but in addition to it. The order of an exercise would be as follows: 1st, a brief and rapid review of the first two lessons; 2d, a more careful review of the lesson of the last Sabbath; 3d, the advance lesson for the day. The best teachers give about one-third of each lesson hour to the reviews. Thus they make haste slowly but surely.

5. In order to make the reviews easily, rapidly, and successfully, the teacher must contrive to hold in mind large masses of the lessons gone over, and must constantly refresh his own memory. Having thus in mind the whole field gone over, he is able to begin at any time an impromptu, miscellaneous review on any part of the field, and the pupils seeing that the teacher thinks it worth while to remember what they have learned, will be stimulated to do likewise.

6. If practicable there should always be a thorough final review — a re-studying of the whole subject,—not occupying as much time as the first study did, but being equally thorough. In no other way can the full and highest advantage be gained from the lessons.

Violations.—The widespread and constant violations of this last great law of teaching will occur to every one who reads the foregoing statements and rules. But the disastrous results of these violations are known only to those who have taken thoughtful account of the stinted and wholly inadequate outcome of all our laborious and costly teaching work. When for the time our pupils should have become teachers they "have need that one teach them again." Forever learning they seem "never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." Such at least is the case in too many classes and schools. And although the lack of reviews is not the sole cause of the failures, the thorough use of reviews would go far to remedy the evils from all sources. We pour water into broken cisterns; good reviews would stop the cracks, though they might not increase at once the quantity poured in.

The first violation of this law is the total neglect of reviews, and the second is the inadequate amount. A third violation is the delay of all review till the end of the quarter, when the lessons

to be reviewed are wholly forgotten; and a fourth, nearly as bad, is found in a degradation of the review into a lifeless repetition of the same questions and answers as those used at first. The full force and philosophy of the law require that the review shall be to the first study what the finishing touches and the varnish are to the great painting, whose finest features and tints they correct, reinforce, and preserve.

I have now concluded my discussion of the Seven Laws of Teaching. If I have succeeded in my purpose, I have made to rise up and pass before the reader, 1st, the *True Teacher* richly understanding the lesson he desires to communicate; 2d, the *True Pupil* with attention aroused and interest excited; 3d, the *True Medium* of communication—a language clear, simple, and perfectly understood by both, and, 4th, the *True Lesson*—the actual knowledge which is to be communicated. I have presented these two parties and these two spiritual facts in their appropriate action; 5th, the *Act of Teaching*, the teacher rousing and guiding the self-activities of the pupil; and, 6th, the learner under this guidance reproducing the knowledge communicated; and, 7th, the final review, testing, correcting, and fixing into permanence and power the lessons learned. In all this there has been shown in one compound and complete statement what must be found in every perfect and finished act of true teaching. The mastery of these laws may not make a perfect teacher, but a full and careful observance of them as they have been explained, and by use of the requisite mental and moral endowments, will as certainly produce their effect as any other laws of nature will effect the changes for which God designed them.

LESSON CALENDAR FOR 1875.

DATE.	TOPIC.	TEXT.	DATE.	TOPIC.	TEXT.
	FIRST HALF OF YEAR. LESSONS IN OLD TESTAMENT.			LAST HALF OF YEAR. LESSONS IN JOHN.	
Jan. 3	Joshua Encouraged,....	Josh. 1: 1- 9	July 4	The Word Made Flesh,.	John 1: 1-14
" 10	Crossing the Jordan,....	Josh. 3: 14-17	" 11	Following the Lamb,...	John 1: 35-46
" 17	Memorial Stones,.....	Josh. 4: 4- 9	" 18	Jesus at the Marriage,..	John 2: 1-11
" 24	Preparation for Conquest	Josh. 5: 9-15	" 25	The New Birth,.....	John 3: 7-17
" 31	Jericho Taken,.....	Josh. 6: 12-20	Aug. 1	The Water of Life,.....	John 4: 5-15
Feb. 7	Achan's Sin,.....	Josh. 7: 19-26	" 8	Jesus at Bethesda,.....	John 5: 5-15
" 14	Ebal and Gerizim,.....	Josh. 8: 30-35	" 15	The Bread of Life,.....	John 6: 47-58
" 21	Caleb's Inheritance,....	Josh. 14: 6-15	" 22	Jesus the Christ,.....	John 7: 40-46
" 28	The Land Divided,.....	Josh. 18: 1-10	" 29	Freedom by the Truth,..	John 8: 28-36
March 7	The Cities of Refuge,...	Josh. 20: 1- 9	Sept. 5	The Light of the World, The Good Shepherd,....	John 9: 1-11 John 10: 1-11
" 14	The Altar of Witness,...	Josh. 22: 21-27	" 12	The Resurrection and the Life,.....	John 11: 34-44
" 21	Joshua's Warning,.....	Josh. 23: 11-16	" 19		
" 28	*Review.*—God's Mercies to Israel,.....	Josh. 24: 1-13	" 26	*Review.*—Christ Rejected	John 11: 47-53
April 4	Israel's Promise,.....	Josh. 24: 14-18	Oct. 3	Jesus Lifted Up,.....	John 12: 23-33
" 11	The Promise Broken,...	Judges 2: 11-16	" 10	Washing the Disciples' Feet,.....	John 13: 1- 9
" 18	The Call of Gideon,.....	Judges 6: 11-18	" 17	Many Mansions.....	John 14: 1- 7
" 25	Gideon's Army,.....	Judges 7: 1- 8	" 24	The Vine and the Branches,.....	John 15: 1- 8
May 2	The Death of Samson,..	Judges 16: 25-31	" 31	Friends and Foes of Jesus	John 15: 11-19
" 9	Ruth and Naomi,.....	Ruth. 1: 16-22	Nov. 7	The Work of the Spirit,.	John 16: 7-14
" 16	A Praying Mother,.....	1 Sam. 1: 21-28	" 14	Jesus Interceding,.....	John 17: 15-21
" 23	The Child Samuel,.....	1 Sam. 3: 1-10	" 21	Jesus the King,.....	John 18: 33-38
" 30	The Death of Eli,.....	1 Sam. 4: 12-18	" 28	Jesus on the Cross,.....	John 19: 25-30
June 6	Samuel the Judge,.....	1 Sam. 7: 5-12	Dec. 5	Jesus and Mary,.....	John 20: 11-18
" 13	A King Desired,.....	1 Sam. 8: 4- 9	" 12	Jesus and Thomas,.....	John 20: 24-31
" 20	Saul Chosen,.....	1 Sam. 10: 17-24	" 19	Jesus and Peter,.....	John 21: 15-22
" 27	*Review.*—Samuel's Parting Words,.....	1 Sam. 12: 20-25	" 26	*Review.*—The Ministry of Jesus.	

INTERNATIONAL SERIES OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

LESSON I.—JAN. 3, 1875.—JOSHUA ENCOURAGED.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 1 : 1-9. Commit 5-9; Primary Verse, 9.

1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayst observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whither soever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."—2 TIM. 2 : 1.

TOPIC.—BE STRONG.

HOME READINGS.

M. Josh. 1 : 1- 9.....God's Command to Joshua.
T. Josh. 1 : 10-15.....Joshua's Command to the People.
W. Josh. 1 : 16-18.....The People's Response.
Th. Judges 7 : 1-22.....The Strength of Gideon.
F. Judges 14 : 6, 19; 15 : 14...The Strength of Samson.
S. 2 Cor. 12 : 5-10.....The Strength of Paul.
S. Heb. 11 : 1-40.....The Strength of Faith.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Joshua was born in Egypt. Whose son, and of what tribe was he? Num. 13 : 8. Where first mentioned? Ex. 17 : 8-13. What was his name at first? Num. 13 : 16. Who changed it, and how? How was he saved from being stoned? Num. 14 : 10. When was he made Moses' minister? Num. 27 : 15-23. What sort of a man was he? Num. 27 : 18; Deut. 34 : 9. Joshua led the Israelites into the promised land. What does Christ do for us?

2.—What kind of a land was it that God promised to the Israelites? Ex. 3 : 8; Deut. 8 : 7-9. How was it described? Gen. 15 : 18; Deut. 11 : 24. What kind of people inhabited the land? Deut. 11 : 29-31, 18 : 9-12; Ex. 34 : 11-16. What kind of a country is that to which we journey? Heb. 11 : 16. Who inhabits it?

3.—What was the first command God gave to Joshua? 2. Joshua had with him about 600,000 soldiers, besides the women and children. Such a host as that could not move at a moment's notice. "Arise" therefore means "get ready immediately." Second command was: "Go over Jordan." Was the crossing just then difficult? 3 : 15 (last part of verse). How did God get the people over? 3 : 14-16. Will God ever allow his children to get into difficulties from which there is no escape? 1 Cor. 10 : 13. Third command: "Be strong." From whence comes our strength? Ps. 121; Isa. 40 : 29; Heb. 3 : 19. How, then, did God mean he should be strong? What did the Lord mean by so often repeating this command? Where is *your* strength?

4.—What was God's first promise to Joshua? 2-4. Had he ever promised this before? What was the second promise? 5. Does he give unto us similar protection? John 10 : 27-29. What was the third? 6. Have we an inheritance? Col. 1 : 12. What was the fourth? 7, 8. What was the condition of his "prospering"? Can we really prosper if we do not serve God?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE BOOK.—Joshua belongs to the *theocratico-historical* books of the Bible, so called because they give not merely the secular history of the Jews, but their history specially as the people of God. These books, also called "The First, or Prior Prophets," besides Joshua, include Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings. Modern research has detected so many points of resemblance between this book and the five preceding, that by some it has come to be supposed that originally it formed part of the Pentateuch, from which it was separated in the time of Ezra. Its authorship is unknown. The Talmud, many Jewish and the earlier Christian writers ascribe it to Joshua himself. But no contemporary proof of the fact exists, while chapter 24: 29–33 was evidently added at a later date, and the capture of Hebron, of Debir, (15: 13–19; Judg. 1: 10–15,) of Leshem (19: 47; Judg. 18: 7), and the occupation of Jerusalem probably did not occur till after his death. Chapters 1–12 tell of the conquest; 13–22 of the division of territory; 23, 24 of Joshua's farewell.

THE MAN.—1. *History.*—Born in Egypt. Tribe of Ephraim, and son of Nun. Num. 13: 8. First mentioned in fight with Amalek. Ex. 17: 8–13. Accompanied Moses up the Mount of God. Ex. 24: 13. When Moses removed the Tabernacle out of the camp as a sign of God's displeasure for worshiping the golden calf, Joshua alone dwelt in it. Ex. 33: 11. Was one of the spies. Num. 13: 8. Name changed by Moses (Num. 13: 16) from Oshea, or Hosea (meaning *salvation*) by the addition of the name Jehovah, to Jehoshua, which, of course, means *God's salvation*. By contraction, this became Joshua, the Greek form of which is JESUS. Matthew 1: 21 gives the reason why Christ was so called. Saved from being stoned by miraculous interposition. Num. 14: 10. Formally installed as the "minister"—more properly, "adjutant"—of Moses. Num. 27: 15–23. Joshua must have been about eighty-five years old when our lesson opens.

2. *Character.*—Full of the spirit of wisdom. Num. 27: 18; Deut. 34: 9. Joshua was a simple, straightforward, God-fearing soldier. Always brave, his courage seems to come from his faith in Jehovah, by whom he was often strengthened for battle. See especially ch. 5: 10–15. Circumspect and prudent before a battle, he always took full advantage of his successes after it. Though no prophet or lawgiver like Moses, he was distinguished equally as a general and as a ruler. How little he acted for himself may be seen in the modest possession he asked for at the hands of the Jews. Ch. 19: 49, 50. "His courage is humility; his strength is faith; his wisdom is obedience and fear of the Lord."

3. *As a Type.*—Joshua did what Moses, by reason of the broken law, could not do—led the people into the promised land. So also Christ. Rom. 8: 3. "Jesus and Joshua begin where Moses leaves off." The law is our Moses—Jesus is our Joshua. Joshua divides the "inheritance"—Christ brings "many sons into glory." Heb. 2: 10. For our inheritance, see John 14: 2, 3; Col. 1: 12; 1 Pet. 1: 3, 4.

THE LAND.—*Boundaries* as promised: Gen. 15: 18; Deut. 11: 24; Ex. 23: 31; Num. 34: 1–12. Statements in these passages are general only. Boundaries as realized—limits actually laid down: 11: 16–17; 12: 1–8; 13; 14. *Character:* Ex. 3: 8; 13: 5; Lev. 20: 24; Ezek. 20: 6; Num. 13: 23, 27; Deut. 8: 7–9. *Size:* Greatest length, 155 miles; greatest width, 85 miles. Area, about 8650 square miles—about the same as Vermont. *Climate:* Its lofty heights and profound depths make Palestine a country where each locality has its own special climate. The Arabic poets say of Lebanon: "He bears the winter on his head, the spring on his shoulders, in his bosom the autumn, and summer slumbers at his

feet." *People:* East of the Jordan, were the kingdoms of Sihon and Og. Besides Gibeon and its dependent towns, there were six tribes subdivided into thirty-one petty kingdoms. Ch. 12. For their moral and religious character see Gen. 19: 5; Deut. 12: 29–31; 18: 9–12; Ex. 34: 11–16. The name Palestine is derived from the word Philistia, "the country of the Philistines." The land of Christ is best known by the name of its worst enemies, even as the cross, the instrument of his humiliation, on the banners of his hosts and throughout the world, has become the symbol of honor.

Explanatory.

"*After the Death of Moses.*"—After the thirty days of mourning.

The Lord Spake.—To Moses God spake "mouth to mouth even apparently." Num. 12: 7, 8; Ex. 33: 11. In respect to such intimate intercourse there has been no one like Moses. Deut. 34: 10. Samuel seems to have been classed next to him. Jer. 15: 1. Some have supposed from Num. 27: 21 that Joshua's intercourse with God was limited to the high priest for its channel. That, however, was but the beginning. God always enlarges his communications and makes them more direct in proportion to our capacity and preparation to receive them. His first message to us often comes through human lips—his later ones through the whisperings of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 2: 10, 13; 2 Cor. 13: 14. That God actually talked with Joshua, and at later times with Samuel, see 5: 13–15; 1 Sam. 3.

"*That the Sole of Your Foot,*" *etc.*—There shall be no portion of the land—not even a foot's breadth—that shall not be yours.

This Lebanon.—Spoken of as if, like the Jordan, it were close by, because, like the Jordan, it was actually in sight, though it was over a hundred miles to the northward. See Moses' view of the promised land. Deut. 34: 1–3. Joshua must have been standing on the same eminence where Moses had been. Tristram has discovered a spot which answers to Mt. Nebo in that all the land can be seen from it, and no doubt it is that mountain. It is about three miles southwest of Heshbon, overlooks the mouth of the Jordan, is "over against Jericho," (Deut. 34: 1,) and its gently sloping side, may well answer to the "field of Zophim." Num. 23: 14. It is not an isolated peak but the highest of a succession of bare, turf-clad eminences.

All the Land of the Hittites.—An expression used for the whole land of Canaan. 1 K. 10: 29; 2 K. 7: 6.

Mayest Prosper—Have Good Success—better rendering is "do wisely."

This Book of the Law—"All the law which my servant Moses commanded thee." V. 8.

Lesson Topics.

THE COMMANDS.—1. "Arise." Preparation necessary. V. 2. 2. "Go over this Jordan." One thing at a time. Not a command to fight, though Joshua knew that it meant battle in the end. 3. "Be strong (of heart) and of a good courage." The first reason that God gives to Joshua why he should be courageous is that he shall realize the hopes that, probably, he was even then dwelling in thought upon—"divide for an inheritance the land." 4. "Only be thou strong and very courageous." Command repeated. This time the real reason is given why God wants him to be firm of faith and of heart—"that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law." The Lord thought more of his keeping the law than of his conquering the country. He had had one failure—Moses had not kept *all* the law. He wanted Joshua to understand that the condition of his vanquishing others was the complete subjugation of himself to God's will. So he further says: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth," etc.—"for thou shalt make thy way prosperous." It is a favorite saying of Mr. Moody's that God can never use a self-sufficient man.

THE PROMISES.—"Every command of God is a promise." The Lord told

Joshua to "go over Jordan," which was then overflowing its banks. Knowing he had no way to get over, he told Joshua to "go," but he Himself provided the way. 3:15. That the Lord himself considers his commands as promises, see how, in v. 9, he sums up the reasons for being of a good courage in this: "Have not I commanded thee?"

1st Promise (2–4): A reiterated description of the land. God did not mean there should be any doubt as to what he should give to the children of Israel. 2d Promise: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." Why? "As I was with Moses so will I be with thee; I will not forsake thee nor fail thee." So far as Joshua was concerned, the land was already conquered. 3d Promise: "Thou shall divide for an inheritance the land." Joshua's future was all outlined before him. He was to conquer, then divide; and the Lord assures him that his work shall be permanent—"for an inheritance." Deut. 1:38. Verses 7, 8, 9 are repetitions of the promises with the conditions prefixed.

THE OBEYING.—(10–18; 3.) The word of the Lord found both an obedient ruler and an obedient people. Joshua receives the command and immediately transmits it to the people. Before the day had gone by, in all probability, the humblest follower in the camp knew that God had talked with Joshua, and given him his marching orders. "Three days for rations—then the enemy"—was the cry that went all through the host. No idleness in the camp after that. The portion of the Israelites to whom a possession had already been assigned were as busy as the rest, for to them there was no repose until their brethren had also "entered into rest."

Winnowed Truths.

1.—How thoroughly the idea that Christians are to be soldiers, "strong and of a good courage," is set forth in the Scriptures! What the "good fight" is: 1 Tim. 6·12. How to prepare for it: 2 Tim. 2:3, 4. The armor: Eph. 6: 10–18. Our foe: Eph. 6:12; Rom. 12:21. Our leader: Rom. 8:37. Certainty of our success: Rom. 8:31, 37. Our reward: 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

2.—Observe God's way of making a covenant. The conditions he puts upon Joshua are only that he shall "arise," "go over Jordan," and "be of a good courage." All the hard conditions he takes upon himself. So it ever is. He asks us to serve him, but it is He that gives us strength to overcome—a strength made *perfect* in our weakness. 2 Cor. 12:9; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 4:16; 13:6.

3.—The necessity of such large help from God. Ps. 22:29; 127:1; 52:7; John 15:24; Rom. 7:15, 19–25; 1 John 5:5.

4.—The real battle-ground was in Joshua's own heart. That is evidenced by the frequent injunctions: "Only be thou strong and very courageous." So Christ tested Peter. John 21:15–17. No servant of God is fitted for his service until he has first fought this heart-battle. 2 Tim. 2:21; Matt. 6:33; 7:5; Luke 14:28; 2 Cor. 12:9, 10; Jer. 15:19; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:1, 5; Heb. 12:1.

5.—As Canaan was really conquered when Joshua became victor over himself before a tent was struck, so our victories are all within—we win heaven on this side of Jordan. Phil. 4:3; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 20:12; 21:27; 1 John 4:12; 5:12.

6.—"This book of the law" was to be one of the sources of Joshua's strength. Men who have shook the world have been made out of those who have "meditated" in God's law day and night. See how often its reading is enjoined and commended. Deut. 6:7–9; 17:19, 20; Ps. 1:1, 2; 119:19, 20; John 5:39; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:15.

7.—The great thought in the lesson is: God is the Source of our Strength. "Be strong in the Lord" is the reiterated injunction. And how many lives, that we know of ourselves, have been sustained during "a great fight of afflictions" by a hidden, inner power not born of themselves! Isa. 40:29–31; Ps. 84:5–7; 103:4, 5; Phil. 4:13.

HYMN.

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

BLACKBOARD.

IF GOD BE FOR US

BE STRONG IN | FAITH. Rom. 4:20. GRACE. 1 Tim. 2:1. THE LORD. Eph. 6:10.

Who can be Against us? Rom. 8:31.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Draw a rough outline map of Palestine, showing the location of each of the seven tribes—the Hittites, Canaanites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, and Gergashites.

2.—Tell your class how the Israelites were oppressed in Egypt; how God, promising them this land, led them out; how they wandered in the wilderness for forty years, and then show where they are now encamped.

3.—Tell them of **Moses**; of his leadership; of his death, and wonderful burial, and then speak of the new leader, describing what he had been, and what God expected of him.

4.—Show how anxious God was that Joshua should be strong and of a good courage. Explain what it was that God wanted him to found his courage upon—"I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

5.—Draw a map of the country which every one has to conquer—his own heart—and fill it with the names of its evil inhabitants—Pride, Anger, Deceitfulness, etc.

6.—Dwell upon the fact that these evil inhabitants are so many and so strong that they can not be driven out except as they take Joshua's helper for their helper.

HYMN.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high his royal banner,
It must not suffer loss:
From victory unto victory
His army shall be lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.

BLACKBOARD.

I will STRENGTHEN THEE,
Yea, I will HELP THEE,
Yea, I will UPHOLD THEE.
Isa. 41:10.

LESSON II.—JAN. 10, 1875.—CROSSING THE JORDAN.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 3:14-17 Commit 14-17; Primary Verse, 17.

14 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,)

16 That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—Is. 43: 2.

TOPIC.—THE LIVING GOD.

HOME READINGS.

M. Josh. 2: 1-4.....The Journey of the Spies.
T. Josh. 3: 1-13.....The Preparation.
W. Josh. 3: 14-17.....The Passage.
Th. Ex. 14: 15-31.....Crossing of the Red Sea.
F. Dan. 3: 14-28.....Unharmed by Fire.
S. Dan. 6: 16-23.....Unhurt by Lions.
S. John 20: 1-21.....Superior to Death.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Be sure to read about the journey of the spies, in the second chapter, for that is introductory to the events given in the lesson. Also study carefully the Home Readings. They are always designed to be among your very best "helps."

2.—What two names are given to the ark in verses 11 and 13? See what it is called in 1 Sam. 3: 3; Num. 4: 5. Why was it called "ark of the covenant"? Deut. 31: 26. This "book of the law" was the ten commandments, and *they* are called "the words of the covenant." Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 9: 11. How was it made? Ex. 25: 10-21; 37: 1-9. What did it contain beside the tables of the law? Heb. 9: 4.

The ark was now to lead the children of Israel. What had lead them before? Ex. 13: 21. "The Lord went before them in a pillar of a cloud." Was he in the ark also? Ex. 25: 22; 2 K. 19: 15.

3.—Who were the usual bearers of the ark? Num. 4: 15. They were not allowed to touch it or see into it. Num. 4: 15, 20. See what happened to Uzzah for touching it, and to the men of Beth-Shemesh for looking into it. 2 Sam. 6: 7; 1 Sam. 6: 19. Num. 4: 5 tells how it was kept from sight on a journey.

4.—What were the people to do? 5. What is the meaning of the word "sanctify"? One mode—by changing garments, is mentioned in Gen. 35: 2, and one by washing, in Ex. 19: 10-14. Ask your teacher if it was one of these.

5.—Near what city did the crossing take place? 16. How high was the river? 15. What time in the year? 15. This would be the latter part of April or the first part of May. The overflow is caused by the melting of snow on the mountains.

6.—What happened when the feet of the priests that bore the ark touched the waters? 16, 17. What did the priests do when they reached the middle of the river bed? 17. They stood still "with a firm foot." How did the people go over? 4: 10.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE ARK.—Called here "Ark of the Covenant," and "Ark of the Lord." In Num. 4: 5 it is spoken of as "the ark of testimony," and in 1 Sam. 3: 3 as "the ark of God." As the ten commandments carried in it are referred to both as "the covenant" and "the testimony" that accounts for the ark being called by those names. The presence of God himself is indicated in the others. The ark contained besides the "testimony" the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. Heb. 9: 4. Was made of acacia wood 2½ cubits by 1½, overlaid within and without with gold, the mercy-seat being the lid. For full description see Ex. 25: 10-21; 37: 1-9. As the children have been cited to the same reference it may be well to examine it thoroughly!

The ark is now the leader—not the cloud. The fulfillment of the promise was come. Henceforward they were to walk by sight as well as by faith. The cloud had been to them the constant reminder of God's covenant to bring them into the land assured to Abraham. When it lifted they beheld it before them. The covenant being fulfilled the sign of the covenant was taken away. But the Lord was in the ark as he had been in the cloud. In order that all the people might have opportunity to see that he was, they were ordered to keep 2,000 cubits away—3,000 feet—a Sabbath day's journey. They saw that when the ark entered the water. The ark went before, not so much to show the road as to make a road. They were to learn that their God was the way: "That ye may know the way by which ye must go, for ye have not passed this way heretofore"—more literally, "yesterday and

the day before " 4. The way which they were unfamiliar with, and through which they had never been, was the Lord's way for them to enter Canaan.

THE BEARERS.—The sons of Kohath were the designated bearers. Num. 4: 15. They might not touch nor look upon it. Num. 4: 15, 20. Over fifty thousand of the men of Beth-shemesh were destroyed because of having looked in it, (1 Sam. 6: 19,) and when Uzzah put forth his hand to keep it from falling when the oxen stumbled, he was smitten even there so that he died by its side. 2 Sam. 6: 6, 7; 1 Chr. 13: 9, 10. It was the duty of Aaron and his sons to cover it so that it could not be seen on setting forth on the journey. Num. 4: 5. In this chapter the bearers are spoken of as "priests." For explanation see Deut. 31: 9, 25.

THE PEOPLE.—They were commanded "to sanctify" themselves—not any one of the ceremonial sanctifications, such as washing (Ex. 19: 10, 14) or changing of garments. Gen. 35: 2. This was no ceremonial observance—they had no time for that—but such an inward purification as is consistent with "a looking for the coming of God." It was not to be so that he could do no "mighty works there because of their unbelief." With a people, as with a man, there must be a spiritual preparation for miracles.

THE PLACE.—Just where the passage was effected the valley of the Jordan is narrowed by the nearer approach of the mountain ridges. The river bed is about ninety feet wide. Then comes a valley extending up to the slopes of the hills, covered with vegetation, and about a quarter of an hour's journey across. Then, about forty or fifty feet higher, is the rest of the valley; the whole width of which is called the Ghor. The overflow is still annual in the latter part of April and beginning of May, (beginning of harvest, 1 Chr. 12: 15,) and is caused by the melting of snows upon the mountains. As the overflow usually reaches only the second embankment, it is supposed that at this time it did not cover the whole valley of the Ghor.

In its overflow it can not be forded. Then it is ten or twelve feet deep near Jericho, and the current is very strong. Swimming would be the only method possible for people without boats. The difficulty in crossing it when it is overflowed is mentioned in Jer. 12: 5, and that the brave Gadites should have accomplished it, by swimming probably, is recorded as not the least of their remarkable achievements—"the least of whom could resist an hundred, and the greatest a thousand." 1 Chr. 12: 14, 15.

The city of Adam may possibly have its name perpetuated and its site approximately located by the ford Damieh, near to which is the remains of a Roman bridge. Zaretan may possibly also be preserved in the modern Kurn Sartabeh, a long towering ridge a little south-west of the ford. The conjecture is favored both by the situation and the names. Kurn Sartabeh is about fifteen miles from Jericho, which answers to the expression "very far." "Very far, *by* the city of Adam," etc., will give the true idea of the meaning.

THE MIRACLE.—The reasons of its performance are given. 1. "This day will I *begin* to magnify thee," etc. God must be respected in the person of his servant. But there was no announcement of this intention. Joshua announces the miracle, but gives God the glory. Joshua speaks for God, and God makes the miracle speak for Joshua. 2. "Hereby shall ye know that the LIVING GOD is among you." The glory of the Israelites was that their God was a living God, and this fact made them the terror of their enemies." 2: 10, 11; 5: 1. It was one of the most frequent lessons taught the Israelites that he was a living God, and that idols were lying vanities (vain things). Lev. 19: 4; 26: 1; Deut. 32: 21; Jer. 8: 19; 14: 22; Ps. 31: 6; Jonah 2: 8. Sad that they should have needed the lesson so often! After awhile the lesson must have become well learned, at least for a time, for the strongest form of oath came to be

prefaced with: "As the Lord liveth." Judg. 8: 19; 1 Sam. 14: 39; 1 K. 1: 29. Daniel's triumph was through this living God (Dan. 6: 26, 27), and so was that of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Dan. 3: 29. And over Christ the Son of the living God the tomb had no bars, not easily broken. 1 Pet. 3: 18. 3. "That ye may know that he will without fail drive out the Canaanite," etc. The force of the miracle is made to extend beyond giving them an entrance into a land from which there would be no retreat. When the Lord drove back the river it was as if he had stretched forth his hand and driven back all their enemies. It was a confirmation of the promise in Ex. 33: 2; Deut. 7: 1, and Ex. 34: 10. It was proof of the fact that Joshua was right in calling God "The Lord of the whole earth," (13,) for it displayed his power over one of the most unstable of its elements. By the accounts that had been preserved of the crossing of the Red Sea, they knew that the seas were under his control. Now the sight of his power was to give them greater faith.

THE PASSAGE.—It occurred the 10th day of the first month, and therefore was the same time in the year as the preparation for their departure from Egypt. 4: 19; Ex. 12: 3. This, like that, was just before the Passover. 5: 10; Ex. 13: 3. But how different was this host from that which passed through the Red Sea. That was a disorganized mob that was fleeing in terror from the pursuing Egyptians, unable, as yet, to trust their God. In spite of the bitter bondage from which they were escaping, and the miracles which were constantly being wrought for their protection and sustenance, it was a host that continually forgot their Almighty leader, was prone to worship idols, and longed for the leeks and the onions and the flesh pots of Egypt. This was a disciplined people who knew what it was to sanctify themselves; they had learned the lesson of faith and obedience, for the want of which their fathers had perished in the wilderness; and now, that they had come to the Jordan, they had confidence in their God and in their appointed leader.

No imagination can be too vivid in realizing this scene. The overflowing, turbulent river—the slowly advancing ark—the gazing multitude; led by the announcement of Joshua and their inward sanctification to expect this manifestation of the power and presence of Jehovah—the parting of the waters as the sacred ark entered its brim—their standing up "upon a heap" very far off, near the city of Adam, while below the unsupplied bed ran dry—the standing still of the priests "with a firm foot" in the middle of the river bed, calm and full of faith, while the people—mindful and somewhat fearful of the growing wall of waters, held back only by an invisible hand—"hasted and passed over" (4: 10)—their wonder, praise, and thanksgiving on the farther shore, and the sinking of heart of all the people in the land, whose hearts "melted" within them, neither was there any more spirit in them because of this miracle (5: 1)—these can not be too graphically told.

Suggestive Topics.

1.—"Without Pillar of Cloud or Ark of the Covenant God still goes before his people. We walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5: 7), and endure as seeing him who is invisible. Heb. 11: 27; 2 Cor. 4: 18. Christ, as well as Cæsar, never says *ite* "go," but *venite* "come," follow me.

2.—Not now in pillar of cloud or of fire, nor in temples made with hands is the dwelling place of the Most High God, but his abiding place is within us. Acts 17: 24; Rom. 8: 9; 1 Cor. 3: 16; 6: 19; 2 Cor. 6: 16; Eph. 3: 16, 17.

3—We live in the presence of no hidden mystery—no covered ark—no veiled Holy of Holies—but to us is unfolded that "which was kept secret since the world began." Rom. 16: 25, 26: Matt. 13: 35; Luke 12: 2; Luke 10: 21; 2 Cor. 4: 11–18.

4.—When we want a blessing we should first sanctify ourselves. If we

only prepared ourselves to receive blessings we might oftener have them. Mal. 3: 10; 1 Pet. 3: 8–11; Jas. 4: 8.

5.—Whom the Lord makes great is truly great. 1 Chr. 29: 11, 12; 2 Thess. 3: 3; Ps. 15; Ps. 12: 3; Matt. 5: 19; 1 John 4: 4; Is. 40: 15, 28–31; Ps. 18: 31–35.

6.—It must have been a great comfort to Joshua that God's work for him and in him was only just begun. But we have the same joy. Ps. 138: 8; Phil. 1: 6; John 3: 2; Heb. 3: 14.

7.—We rejoice in a living God—not an inflexible order of nature—not a protoplasmic spot—not an evolution of things by natural selection—but the Creator who spoke the world into being, and who is superior to his creation and not bound by its laws—a miracle wonder-working God. Job. 37: 1–24; Is. 9: 6; 25: 1.

8.—As we serve a living God, and are no longer "dead in trespasses and sins," we are to be a living people. 1 Pet. 2: 4, 24; Rom. 6: 13; Rev. 3: 1; Col. 3: 1–4; Jas. 2: 17; Rom. 12: 1.

9.—How troubles vanish before the people who put their trust in the Lord! Job 5: 9; 36: 15; Ps. 34: 7, 17, 19; 1 Cor. 10: 13.

10.—When we come to our Jordan, we shall find on the further shore, not enemies of our peace and of our inheritance, but "an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first born." (Heb. 12: 22–24,) and the terror of death shall be taken away. 1 Cor. 15: 54–57.

HYMN.

We are waiting by the river,
We are waiting on the shore;
We are waiting for our Saviour—
Soon he'll come and guide us o'er.
Though the mist hangs o'er the river,
And its billows loudly roar,
Yet he will divide its waters
Till we reach the farther shore.

BLACKBOARD.

Through Jordan into the PROMISED LAND.
Through Death INTO LIFE.
THE ARK—THE CROSS.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Draw again a rough outline map of Palestine, showing where the Israelites were encamped—only a river between them and the land that God had promised them. But that river was swollen and angry, and they had no means of crossing. Yes, they had God who was able to make a way.

2.—Describe the journey of the spies—where they had been—whom they had seen—their return. For their report the Israelites were waiting.

3.—The Lord meant to do a great thing for the people, so he told them to sanctify themselves—to drive out all evil thoughts, and to meditate upon his power and goodness. God can do nothing for those who will have nothing to do with him.

4.—God had prepared a way for them; but such an unexpected way—right through the waters! He told Joshua that he meant to do so, and Joshua told the people. God meant in this way to make the Israelites honor Joshua and have faith in Himself. He meant to divide the waters so that they might know that he had power enough to overcome their enemies.

5.—While all the people looked on, the priests took the ark and bore it to the river as they had been commanded. The stream looked terrible, but God could control it. Just as soon as their feet entered the river the Lord divided the waters and all the people went over on dry ground.

6.—Jesus is our Joshua. The cross is

our ark. The river of death is our Jordan, and beyond it is the beautiful kingdom which God has prepared for all who love him. All who desire safely to cross that river must first "sanctify" themselves, following Jesus as their leader, and never losing sight of the cross.

HYMN.

There's a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we may see it afar;
For the Father waits over the way
To prepare us a dwelling-place there.

In the sweet by and by, in the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore.
In the sweet by and by, in the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore.

BLACKBOARD.

FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK,
IT IS YOUR
FATHER'S GOOD PLEASURE
TO GIVE
YOU THE KINGDOM.

LESSON III.—JAN. 17, 1875.—MEMORIAL STONES.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 4 : 4-9. Commit 4-9; Read 19-24; Primary Verses 6, 7.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man:

5 And Joshua said unto them, pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel:

6 That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8 And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

9 And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old."—Ps. 77: 11.

TOPIC.—When we remember Him, He "forgets" our sins

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Gen.**	**28 : 10-22**	**.....The Dream Memorial.**
T.	**Gen.**	**31 : 43-54**	**..... The Peace Memorial.**
W.	**1 Sam.**	**7 : 7-12**	**.....The Memorial of Victory.**
Th.	**Josh.**	**7 : 13-26**	**.....The Memorial of Guilt.**
F.	**Mark**	**14 : 3- 9**	**.....The Memorial of Love.**
S.	**1 Cor.**	**11 : 24-29**	**.....Our Memorial of Christ.**
S.	**Rev.**	**2 : 17**	**.....Christ's Memorial of us.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—How many stones were there in Jacob's memorial? Gen. 28: 18. What did he pour on it? How many were there in the memorial erected by Jacob and Laban? Gen. 31: 46. What was their "heap" built for? What was the memorial for in 1 Sam. 7: 12, and how many stones were in it? What was the heap of stones raised over Achan for? Josh. 7: 21; 6: 17, 18. The people were commanded long before they came to Jordan to build an altar of stones when they crossed the river. How were they to build it, and what were they to write on it? Deut. 27: 2-8. Were the twelve stones

mentioned in this lesson the altar thus commanded to be erected? Josh. 8: 30–35. Where was that built? Where was this? 20.

2.—How many heaps of stones are spoken of in this lesson? 7, 8. Where did Joshua set up his? Where was the other set up? 20. Was Joshua commanded to set up *two* memorials? 3. Which one was he commanded to make? What do you think made him build one in the river-bed?

3.—What time in the year was this done? 19—about our 1st of April. What is the meaning of "Gilgal"? 5: 9. How many men were chosen to carry stones out of the river? What did each man represent? 2. As each man was chosen for a tribe it was the same as if *all* the Israelites had taken part in making the memorial.

4.—Why were these stones piled up at Gilgal? 22–24. Note that it was for *two* purposes: 1—that the children should be told why the monument was erected; 2—"that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that he is mighty." As you will be interested to see how God told the Israelites to tell their children about the wonderful things that he had done, look at Ex. 12: 26, 27; 13: 14; Deut. 6: 20. How did Christ show his interest in them? Matt. 19: 13–15.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

PRELIMINARY.—Stones, either singly or in heaps, were often used as "memorials." Jacob at Bethel used a single stone, anointing it, to commemorate the fact that God had been with him there. Jacob and Laban made their treaty of reconciliation over a heap of stones. Samuel used only one to show that the Israelites recognized God as their helper against the Philistines. Of course single stones must have been large. Memorial stones were piled up above the bodies of notorious offenders. Achan, whose covetousness could not resist the "goodly Babylonish garment," and the shekels of silver and wedge of gold, was buried in this way. 7: 26. The king of Ai was so served (8: 29), and erring Absalom had this felon's monument. 2 Sam. 18: 17. The two onyx stones worn on the ephod of the high-priest and graven with the names of the twelve tribes were for "a memorial." Ex. 28: 9–12. So were the broad plates made out of the brazen censers to cover the brazen altar. Num. 26: 39, 40.

The heathen nations round about were also in the habit of setting up stones to commemorate remarkable events, the point of resemblance being carried even to the anointing. Such memorials were often worshiped by them,—a custom soon learned from them by apostate Jews. Is. 57: 6.

It should not be overlooked here that the children of Israel had been expressly commanded "to set up great stones on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan." They were to lay them in mortar; no tool of iron was to be used in its erection; the words of the law (probably "the blessings and cursings") were to be plainly inscribed upon them, and even the place of its erection was not left to uncertainty. Deut. 27: 2–8. With what fidelity at Mt. Ebal, the place designated, these directions were fulfilled is recorded in Joshua 8: 30–35. That was a formal taking possession of the land given unto them, with a new dedication of themselves as a people unto the Lord. The monument of the lesson was only in memory of the wonderful way that had been provided for their crossing the Jordan.

JOSHUA'S MEMORIAL.—Of course the teachers have noticed that, besides the heap which Joshua was commanded to build at Gilgal, he himself piles up a monument in the river bed. The earlier commentators have ascribed this action of Joshua to an unrecorded command. As Joshua was a man "under authority," a strict constructionist, this view is probable, and is strengthened by a comparison of chapter 3: 7, 8 with 3: 9–13, and chapter 4: 2, 3 with 4: 4–7; in both of which cases the announcements were larger than the recorded command, and show that at first all did not go on record.

Why put such a memorial in the river-bed where it would soon be overflowed and its stones carried away? The answer is: 1. The memorial would be visible at all times except at the overflow, and, perhaps, even then, for we do not know the size of the stones. 2. It was evidently not designed as a lasting record.

If it lasted one generation it performed its mission, and may have done so even as the stones were laid in place, by the effect that its erection had upon the gazing Israelites.

MEMORIAL AT GILGAL.—Date was 10th day, first month, called Abib, "month of green ears," subsequently called Nisan. Gilgal received its name subsequently from the "rolling away" of the reproach of Egypt from the Israelites. 5:9. The selection of the twelve men is first commanded in the third chapter, but no reason for the command is then given. The purpose of it is disclosed first in the third verse of the present chapter. Twelve men—one man from each tribe—so that in effect it might be as if the whole people carried out the stones and erected the memorials. It was to be a national monument—the recognition of the One by the many. This, like the one in the river-bed, was not designed to endure. The larger permanency was purposed for the one at Mt. Ebal, which was to perpetuate the blessings of faithful obedience and the curses that would follow apostacy.

THE OBJECTS.—1. That the children in time to come (literally "to-morrow") might be led to ask, What mean these stones? (21) and so secure their attention to a full recital of the wonderful event. It was not only Christ in the new dispensation who said "Suffer little children to come unto me," but the God of the Old Testament was as anxious that they be taught of him, and as thoroughly recognized them as of his kingdom, and was as careful that they should not be overlooked. In the ordinance of the Passover (Ex. 12:26, 27; 13:8), in the redemption of the firstlings of their flocks and the first-born of their children (Ex. 13:12–14), and in the observance of the testimonies and statutes (Deut. 6:7–9, 20–24) God provided for their familiar acquaintance with his great deeds for his chosen people. Long before it was written in our copy-books he knew that "just as the twig is bent the tree is inclined." So effectually did he provide for their instruction that we have the Psalmist saying: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old." Ps. 44:1.

2. "That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that he is mighty." Primarily the miracle was to establish his great name upon the earth, but, secondarily, as in the case of that at the Red Sea (Ex. 15:14–16), it was to make great fear come upon the nations. This permanent testimony of the miracle would tend to accomplish both aims.

Golden Grain.

1.—The Lord does not forget us. Ps. 115:12; 137:5; Zech. 2:8; Matt. 6:8; Luke 12:6,7.

2.—Therefore should we remember him. As his mercies meet us on our own thresholds, we should be ingrates, indeed, to be impassive. Ps. 103:2–5; John 4:10.

3.—It is worth while to keep in mind what it is that God is willing to forget. Heb. 8:12; 10:17; Mic. 7:18, 19.

4.—What we ought to forget. Phil. 3:13, 14.

5.—Though we now have no occasion to perpetuate the name and deeds of God in stone, we can rear those memorials that in his sight are vastly more pleasing. Acts 10:4; Rev. 8:3; 2 Cor. 3:2.

6.—As God takes special pains that children should learn of him, he must mean that they should early become his disciples. Prov. 8:17; Eccl. 12:1; Mark 10:13–16.

BLACKBOARD.

God's Best Memorial TO MEN: The Suffering Saviour ON THE CROSS.	**Man's Best Memorial TO GOD: A LIVING, LOVING, OBEDIENT, FAITHFUL HUMAN HEART. Ye are God's Witnesses.**

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1—Ask your scholars what is placed at the head of a grave. Question them about the uses of such a head-stone. Ask them if, when great men die, their friends put the same kind of stones at the head of their graves. Are they much larger? What are they called? Did they ever see one? Where? Whose was it? Draw a monument on the blackboard and tell them about those erected to such men as Washington, Morse, Franklin, and Lincoln, and what they were severally for — that they are the testimonies of the grateful affection of the people who had been blessed by their services.

2.—Rehearse the crossing of the Jordan, making it a question review, bringing out all that was wonderful in it. Speak of it as God's interposition in behalf of Israel. After his goodness had been so shown to them — when they had just been so blessed by him — what ought they to do when they got over the river? Question them until they answer: "Build a memorial."

3.—Then tell them, in the simplest way, how God commanded them to take a man out of each tribe, twelve men in all, and that these twelve were to take twelve stones, a stone for each man, up out of the river-bed and build them up on a heap as a memorial of the way that the Lord had enabled them to cross the river. Also tell them of the twelve that Joshua piled up in the river-bed.

4.—Ask them again what these two monuments were for. They will be likely to repeat the idea they have learned, that they were to tell of the crossing of the Jordan on dry ground. Then add that they were for two other reasons: 1. That the children of the Israelites might be taught all about it; and, 2. That God's power might be known throughout all the earth. Dwell especially upon the first reason, and connect it with Christ's saying: "Suffer little children," etc.

5.—Has God been good to them? How? Home, parents, friends, clothes, health, etc. Would they like to show that they are grateful to him for all these? If they could build a monument to God it would have to stay in one place. It would never he seen except as people came to it. It could never say anything unless people came up close to it. Would it not be better if they told about their gratitude themselves, and so become little living monuments, speaking of their love to God? Whom should they tell? 1st, God himself; 2d, parents; 3d, teachers; 4th, little friends.

HYMN.

A memorial can we build
To our God on high?
Yes, we write in deeds of love
Words that never die.

Stones shall crumble into dust,
Sleep we 'neath the sod,
But our acts shall live to tell
How we loved our God.

BLACKBOARD.

WE REAR A MONUMENT
BY KIND WORDS,
BY GOOD DEEDS,
BY SELF-DENYING GIFTS,
BY EARNEST PRAYERS,
THAT REACHES HEAVEN.

LESSON IV.—JAN. 24, 1875.—PREPARATION FOR CONQUEST.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 5: 9-15. Commit 10-14; Primary Verse, 14.

9 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the self-same day.

12 And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

13 And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, what saith my Lord unto his servant?

15 And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."—Heb. 12: 2.

TOPIC.—New Consecration—New Faith.

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. 17: 1-14.....The Covenant of Circumcision.
T. Rom. 2: 25-29.....Inward Circumcision.
W. Ex. 12: 1-27.....Passover Enjoined.
Th. Ex. 16: 2-29.....Manna Sent.
F. Num. 22: 21-34.....The Angel in the Way.
S. Matt. 26: 50-54.....The Possible Succor.
S. Rev. 19: 11-21.....Ours and Joshua's Ally.]

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Read carefully the whole chapter. It is all needed to make our lesson complete. The first nine verses are about the circumcision that took place at Gilgal. What was the rite of circumcision a token of? Gen. 17: 1-14. Every "covenant" (see what that means) must have its seal. Turn to Rom. 4: 11 and see what Abraham's circumcision was a seal of. Circumcision represented Abraham's faith as well as God's promise, just as baptism represents our dedication to God as well as his washing away of our sins. Did the circumcision do any good unless a man really kept the law? Rom. 2: 25-29; 1 Cor. 7: 19. Why were all the people now circumcised? Ex. 12: 48.

2.—When was the passover enjoined? Ex. 12. When was it to take place? Ex. 12: 18. Ask your teacher what time in the year this would be. What was meant by the passover? Ex. 12: 26, 27. How long did it last? Ex. 12: 15. What sort of bread did they eat during its observance? What were the circumstances under which the first one was kept? Ex. 13: 3, 4. Did the Israelites ever keep it during their long journey? Num. 9: 1-5. Why do you think God wanted them to observe the passover on their entrance into Canaan? Who is our Passover?

3.—What are "unleavened" cakes? What was it that ceased after the people had eaten of the old corn of the land? 12 What was this manna? Ex. 16: 4, 14; Num. 11: 7-9. Why did God send it?

Ex. 16: 2-4. How much of it was each one permitted to gather? Ex. 16: 4, 16, 21. How much on the sixth day? Ex. 16: 5, 22. Why so much? Ex. 16: 23, 26. Did the Israelites always like it? Num. 11: 6; 21: 5. What did they prefer to it? Num. 11: 5. If you will see what David says about it in Ps. 78: 24, 25, you will be surprised that they ever disliked it. In what respect is Christ like manna? John 6: 31-35, 48-58. Which manna, then, is the best? Will our manna ever cease as theirs did? Do *you* feed upon this true bread?

4.—The circumcision and the passover were both meant not only to signify that God renewed his covenant with his people, but also as a preparation for the conquest. He fights best who fights with the Lord on his side — who has received strength from eating at the Lord's table. But Joshua was additionally strengthened by instructions that he received. Who gave them to him? 14. What were they? Josh. 6: 2-5. Was this Captain of the Lord's Host a man? Whom do you think it was?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CIRCUMCISION.—The first verse of our lesson is so connected with the previous verses of the chapter as to include them in it. The rite was first enjoined as a token of God's covenant with Abraham, being, in this way, written in the flesh. Gen. 17: 1–14. Paul calls it "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised, that he might become the father of all them that believe." Rom. 4: 11. From Deut. 10: 16; 30: 6, it is evident that the people knew that this was no mere formal ceremony, but had a special spiritual significance — the same which is brought out so fully in Rom. 2: 25–29; 3: 10; 1 Cor. 7: 19. So the rite of baptism is an idle ceremony, except for its spiritual meaning. The blood of the Lamb having become the seal of the new covenant of faith, this rite is now done away. Phil. 3: 3; Col. 2: 11; 3: 11. Incidentally it will be interesting to notice the use Christ made of this ceremony in sustaining his right to heal on the Sabbath. John 7: 22, 23.

There were two reasons why it was necessary for the people to be circumcised: 1. They could not otherwise partake of the passover. No one was circumcised except Joshua and Caleb. Num. 26: 64, 65; Ex. 12: 48. 2. On account of their sin at Kadesh-barnea, and because they had provoked the Lord, "now these ten times," God revoked his covenant to give that generation the land "which he sware unto their fathers," (Num. 14: 23,) though he did not, on account of the entreaty of Moses (Num. 14: 12–20), disannul it in regard to the people as a nation. The present generation being uncovenanted with, it was fit and necessary that again the covenant between the Lord and the nation should be renewed with them. It would strengthen their faith for the conquest as showing them that they were chosen to be "a peculiar people unto the Lord," specially led and watched over by him.

THE REPROACH.—The stigma that was rolled away probably was the taunt often uttered by the Egyptians during their wanderings, that the God of Israel had left his people to die in the wilderness, and that he never would fulfill his promise to bring them into Canaan. Thirty-eight years of proximity and no entrance! Thirty-eight years in the desert with all its hardships, when only a short distance away was the border of that land flowing with milk and honey. Of course God had forsaken them or he would have brought his chosen people into it. In this way Egypt cast a reproach upon them — none the less bitter because it was deserved. These taunts must have been quite common, and were made by Moses the basis of many appeals to the Lord. Ex. 32: 12; Num. 14: 13–16; Deut. 9: 28. For later illustrative incidents see Ezek. 16: 57; Joel 2: 16, 17; Zeph. 2: 8. The rite of circumcision being deferred until their actual entrance into the promised land would be to them the strongest proof that the reproach was indeed rolled away, and, as the performance of such a rite would soon be known to all the onlooking nations, they, as well as the Israelites, would know of the renewal

of this strange covenant on the part of the God of Israel to give them the land. So this reproach could no more be heaped upon them.

GILGAL.—A mere name—no town—simply a place of encamping. Referred to only in 2 Sam. 19: 15, 40; Micah 6: 5.

PASSOVER.—Enjoined on their exit from Egypt (Ex. 12: 1, 27), observed at Mt. Sinai (Num. 9: 1–5), and now again commanded on their entrance into the land of the covenant. Three occasions never to be forgotten. Its observance at Sinai was an incident of the journey, especially commanded. It was to be annually kept only after their entry into the land to be given unto them. Ex. 13: 5. God had covenanted the land unto them, had brought them out of Egypt in his own mighty and wonderful way, but he was willing to wait for this annual token of gratitude until the covenant should be fulfilled by formal delivery of the land itself. Having waited so long how sweet in his sight it must have been to see this people, now so obedient and grateful, celebrating the day when he interposed to rescue them from bondage and give them the fair land that lay before them! But their gratitude extended even to more than that, for it covered all those desert journeyings where the Lord had borne them "as a man doth bear his son." Gratitude meant faith, and faith meant power to overcome.

CESSATION OF MANNA.—That failed after they had eaten of the "old corn," left in the granaries of their enemies in their sudden flight. The "parched corn" were grains plucked and roasted, the same as were plucked by the disciples on the Sabbath day (Matt. 12: 1), and such as are still a favorite article of food with the Arabs of the present day. The reason of the giving of manna is recorded in Ex. 16: 2–4; Deut. 8: 3, 16. Its character is fully given in Ex. 16: 14–36; Num. 11: 7, 8. It is spoken of as the "corn of heaven" and as "angels' food" in Ps. 78: 24, 25. Their loathing and disgust for it is given in Num. 11: 4–6; 21: 5, together with the bill-of-fare they would have preferred. It had been sent them to prove them. How it did prove them and found them wanting! Now the manna ceased. They had the land and all its fruits—what need was there of the miraculous bread! Its withdrawal was another confirmation of their faith. No more manna—but milk and honey and corn and fruits. The disappearance of the one was the guaranty of all the others.

THE CAPTAIN (PRINCE) OF THE LORD'S HOST.—1. *The fact.* This appearance evidently was not in vision. Joshua was "by Jericho"—probably considering its defenses and determining the best point of attack. He at first supposed him to be mortal, and his question shows the alert, undaunted soldier. The "man" brings to mind the night wrestling of Jacob. Gen. 32: 24–30. The "drawn sword" naturally suggests, also, the experience of Balaam. Num. 22: 21–34. 2. *Who he was.* In Ex. 12: 41 the Israelites are called "The hosts of the Lord," but nowhere are they called "The host of the Lord." The latter phrase is always used to indicate a celestial array. Gen. 32: 2; 1 K. 22: 19; 2 Chr. 18: 18; Luke 2: 13. His captaincy was over no earthly army. He was the one called "Faithful and True," and who "in righteousness doth judge and make war." Rev. 19: 11–21. In Joshua's being commanded to loose his shoe from off his foot, we recognize the one, too, who talked with Moses at the burning bush (Ex. 3: 5; see, also, Ex. 23: 20–23), and we see in this manifestation of him the fulfillment of the promise recorded in Josh. 1: 5. 3. *Shoes removed.* The ground was cursed for man's sake (Gen. 3: 17), and as some of it adhered to the sandals, they must be taken off. For this reason the priests had to wash hands and feet on entering the sanctuary. Ex. 30: 19; 40: 32. 4. *What he said.* This is not given in this, but is related in the following chapter in the second to fifth verses, the first verse being a sort of parenthesis thrown in by the inspired writer.

Personal.

1.—We should enter upon no great undertaking without a new consecration of ourselves to God. Judg. 18:5; Josh. 3:5; 7:13; 2 Tim. 2:21; Matt. 6:33.

2.—God is ready to renew with us the covenant we have broken. Luke 15:11–32; Jer. 3:21, 22; Is. 55:7.

3.—A renewed covenant brings a renewed faith. Ps. 32:5–7; 1 John 3:21; Heb. 12:1, 2; 1 Pet. 1:3; 2 Thess. 2:16.

4.—God asks our grateful love—not for what he is going to do, but for what he has done. 1 John 4:10, 19; John 15:16.

5.—We must see that the cause of Christ suffers no reproach through us, and that we be to no one an occasion of offence. Matt. 18:6, 7; 2 Cor. 3:2; 6:3; Heb. 6:6; 1 Pet. 4:15, 11.

6.—The Lord's Supper, which is our Passover, should be preceded by a rededication of ourselves to Christ. 1 Cor. 11:27, 28; 5:8.

7.—For them the manna ceased, but how much better for us is the never failing "hidden manna"—the "True Bread" which came down from heaven. John 6:31–35, 48–58; Rev. 2:17.

8.—It is those on duty who meet their Lord. "Joshua was at his post as general when God came and made himself known as generalissimo." Luke 12:35–37; Rev. 16:15; Mark 13:34–37; Matt. 25:1–13.

9.—Those that be for us are more than those against us. Ps. 34:7; 91:11; 2 K. 6:15–17; 2 Chr. 32:7, 8; 16:9; Rom. 8:31.

HYMN.

By day, by night, at home, abroad,
Still are we guarded by our God;
By his unceasing bounty fed;
By his unerring counsel led.

With grateful hearts the fact we own;
The future, all to us unknown,
We to thy guardian care commit,
And peaceful leave before thy feet.

BLACKBOARD.

THE LORD OF HOSTS
IS WITH
An HUMBLE, OBEDIENT, GRATEFUL, BELIEVING PEOPLE.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Tell the children what the passover was, how it originated, and how it was first observed. Did they ever see the Lord's Supper? Is that like the passover in any way? From the last part of the 7th verse of 1 Cor. 5, show that Christ is our passover, and that the Lord's Supper is a commemoration of that fact.

2.—From Ex. 13:5 show that the passover was to be kept every year after the Israelites were led into the promised land. God had now led them through the Jordan. Picture again the crossing of that river, the setting up of the memorial stones, the joy and faith in God of the Israelites who had been thus helped, their willing obedience, and their solemn yet joyful observance of the passover.

4.—Would God be pleased with such loving gratitude? Not only would he be pleased, but he would help them in unexpected ways still more. Then tell about Joshua's going to look at Jericho to see how he could overcome that city; his meeting with the man of the drawn sword; his discovery that it was the Prince of the host of the Lord—even Jehovah himself—who had come to fight for him, and to give the city into his hands.

5.—Teach, 1. That we should daily give ourselves anew to God. 2. That we should be obedient and grateful to him—that the Lord's Supper was established to keep fresh our gratitude to our Saviour. 3. That God will help us overcome all our enemies without and within. 4. If we have his help we are sure of victory.

HYMN.

Strong in the Lord of hosts
And in his mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

BLACKBOARD.

If GOD be FOR us
WHO
Can be AGAINST us?

LESSON V.—JAN. 31, 1875.—JERICHO TAKEN.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 6: 12-20. Commit 12-16, 20; Primary Verse 20.

12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord.

13 And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rearward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

14 And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp. So they did six days.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early, about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

18 And ye, in anywise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

19 But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.

20 So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days."—Heb. 11: 30.

TOPIC.—The Triumph of Faith.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Ex.**	**14: 10-31**	**God's Victory at the Red Sea.**
T.	**Ex.**	**17: 8-13**	**The Victory of Prayer.**
W.	**Judges**	**7: 12-22**	**The Victory of Pitchers and Trumpets.**
Th.	**2 Kings**	**7: 1-20**	**A Victory Without a Battle.**
F.	**2 Chr.**	**20: 1-25**	**The Victory of Song.**
S.	**2 Kings**	**19: 10-35**	**The Victory of Pestilence.**
S.	**Rev.**	**20: 1-14**	**The Final Victory.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—What were the instructions given to Joshua? 3-5. Who gave them? Josh. 5: 13-15. Who was this captain? How many days were the Israelites to go around the city? How many times each day? Were they to go each day the same number of times? How many times in all were they to circle the place? Who and what were in the procession? 8, 9. In going about the city what were the soldiers to do? 10. What were the priests to do? 8. Who composed the "rearward"? Num. 10: 25. What do you think this silent procession was for? Did it end silently?

2.—What did Jericho have around it? Josh. 2: 15; 6: 5. Were the walls thick? Josh. 2: 15. If the walls were so thick that houses were built upon them don't you think that the people inside must have felt pretty secure? When the procession went around them day after day, how do you think they must have felt in looking on it? If you suppose they felt safe, read Josh. 2: 9-11, 24; 5: 1.

3.—What was to happen to the city when it was taken? 17. "Accursed" means "devoted" to God, and all perishable and mortal things devoted to him were to be destroyed. What did happen to the city and its inhabitants? 21, 24. Why did God have the people all destroyed? Deut. 7, 2-10. They worshiped idols, and did things too abominable to mention. But the worst thing of all is given in the last verse of that reference—they "hated" God.

Read, also, verse 16 of the same chapter, and Deut. 20: 16-18. So also shall he do in time to come. Matt. 13: 47-49.

4.—Who alone was saved? 25. Why? 17; 2: 1-16; Jas. 2: 25. Look in Heb. 11: 31 and you will find another reason. Which was the real reason? What sign had she on her house so that the Israelites might know it? chap. 2: 18. Was that a small thread? What would you call it nowadays? Was she a bad woman? Did she become good? What reason have you for believing that she became good? 25.

5.—What was to happen to him who should rebuild the city? 26. Did any one ever bring this curse upon himself? 1 K. 16: 34. What was to happen to him who should keep for himself any of its treasures? 18. Who tried to hide some of them, and what became of him? 7: 19-26.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CITY.—Jericho was one of those ancient fortified cities whose walls, like Babylon, were so thick that houses could be built upon them. Josh. 2: 15. From verses 19, 24, and from Joshua 7: 21 it is evident that it was affluent. After its conquest here it was bestowed on the tribe of Benjamin. Josh. 18: 21. In its subsequent history it is connected with some of the most treasured of Scripture incidents. It was near it that Elijah ascended; Elisha healed its waters (2 K. 2: 1-22); here blind Bartimeus and his companion were restored to sight (Matt. 20: 30; Mark 10: 46-52); Christ supped here with Zaccheus (Luke 19: 1-9). It was finally destroyed by Vespasian. What the feeling was inside those strong walls, when Joshua's army sat down before it, may be gathered from Joshua 2: 9-11, 24; 5: 1.

THE INSTRUCTIONS.—Joshua's instructions received from the Prince of the Host of the Lord (5: 14), are given in verses 3-5. He must have matured a plan of attack, or else was planning one when this captain greater than he issued his superceding orders. That is what he was "by" Jericho for. Yet we hear of no hesitation on his part. It was apparently not in the least difficult for him to give up his own way, though he may have thought of something very brilliant, and that would have made his reputation as a general. To him God's way was unquestioningly the better way, though it was seemingly foolish, and sure to bring ridicule upon the whole host.

Seven.—Seven days, last day seven times, seven priests and seven trumpets bring into special prominence the number seven. It is associated with the idea of completeness, derived from the fact that in six days God finished his work of creation and rested on the seventh. This number was the basis of many of their religious observances. The seventh day of the week was the Sabbath; the seventh month was observed in the Feast of Trumpets; the seventh year was the Sabbath year of rest for the ground; the year succeeding 7 times 7 years was the year of jubilee; seven days were appointed for the passover; seven days for ceremonies consecrating priests. See, also, Rev. 10: 3; 15: 1.

Trumpets.—Used in announcing the year of jubilee. Lev. 25: 9; in sounding war alarms. Jer. 4: 5, 19; Job. 39: 25. Moses was commanded to make two out of silver, for the uses of which see Num. 10: 1-10. *Cornet* is the better translation.

THE COMPASSING.—1. *Order.* 1. Armed men; 2. seven priests; 3. ark; 4. "rearward." As the rearward was usually the office of the tribe of Dan (Num. 10: 25), it is probable that that tribe composed it on this occasion. 2. *Object.* What was the purpose which God had in making the Israelites thus solemnly compass the place a whole week for thirteen times, we can only guess at. As it would try the faith of the Israelites, we may infer that that was its main design. As its manner of capture would soon be known throughout the land remaining to be conquered, those ceremonies, after the event, would be very impressive, however meaningless at the time they may have seemed to the inhabitants of the beleaguered city. The seven days of compassing, the seven times on the seventh day would thus

carry their notion of completeness into the utter destruction of the city, and be significant of the fate that awaited them, and cause their hearts again "to melt within them." 3. *The fact.* Its singularity. No mounds thrown up — no engines planted for demolishing the walls — no undermining — no ladders for scaling — no evidence of generalship. Bishop Hall thinks that "the people in Jericho must have laughed at and derided this harmless procession that once a day circled the town, and then without a menace went into camp." But already their spirits were faint because of the victories over Sihon and Og, and because of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan. Their daily suspense must have been worse than actual conflict and defeat. Day by day their courage must have oozed away, for when the final day came, and the walls fell, there is no record of the least resistance. The noise of the trumpets had been to them the voice of doom. The Israelites had been commanded to be silent in order that God might speak.

THE VICTORY.—The times of marching and of silence were over. Now comes the test of faith. "SHOUT!" and according to your faith be it unto you. And they did shout — not a quavering, uncertain, doubtful voice in that whole assembly. It was the utterance of undoubting faith, and "by faith the walls of Jericho fell down." Heb. 11:30.

THE BAN.—"The city shall be accursed"—*devoted* is the truer meaning. The law concerning things devoted to the Lord is given in Lev. 27. In the 28th and 29th verses of that chapter it will be seen that nothing devoted to him, man or beast, could be redeemed, but must be put to death. See 1 K. 20:42; 1 Sam. 15:3–33. Sometimes when cities were thus "devoted" to God the inhabitants only were put to death. Josh. 8:26, 27; 10:28; Deut. 2:34, 35; 3:6, 7. The reason of this utter destruction lay in the incurable idolatry of the inhabitants and their observances of the most corrupt practices. Lev. 18:1–30. God had commanded it in order that the Israelites might not be tainted with them. Deut. 7:2–6; 20:16–18. The same severity of treatment was to be visited upon themselves for like corruptions. Deut. 13:12–18; 29:18–28. It was properly devoted to God, it and all it contained, as being the "first-fruits" of the land. By dedicating all within it to him, they acknowledged his right to all the land, and themselves as receivers of his bounty. It was the acknowledgement of his royalty. The site of a devoted city was often ploughed over and sowed with salt. Judg. 9:45; Jer. 17:6; Zech. 2:9. It was forbidden to be re-built, and, hence, the curse upon the re-builder of Jericho, which received its fulfillment in the case of Heil. 1 K. 16:34.

The prohibition and penalty for rebuilding, however, must have related especially to the walls, for in Joshua 18:21 Jericho is allotted to the tribe of Benjamin; in Judges 3:13, under the name of "the city of palm trees" it is spoken of as inhabited, and in 2 Sam. 10:5 is so referred to again. "Build" is often used to express the construction of the fortifications of a place, 1 K. 15:17; 2 Chr. 11:6; 14:5, 6; no town being "founded" by merely erecting a collection of houses, but by surrounding them with a wall.

The carrying out of the ban is given in the latter part of the chapter, and the violation and punishment of the command not to take and keep any of the treasures of the city is recorded in Joshua 7:11–26.

RAHAB.—In accordance with the promise made to her (Josh. 2:1–16) she and her kindred were saved alive. That part of the wall upon which her house stood (Josh. 2:15) could not have fallen with the rest. The spies whom she had saved now saved her, and took her and her people to a place of safety without the camp. They were not taken *into* the camp because of their ceremonial uncleanness. Their adoption into the family of Israel must be preceded by the rites of purification. She became the

wife of Salmon (one of the spies it is suggested) and mother of Boaz, one of the ancestors of David, and so became an ancestress of Christ. Wonderful change—from being a harlot to being a progenitress of The Sinless One! He who was called to be much with publicans and sinners, and whose feet were washed with the tears of a harlot, and wiped with the hairs of her head, had such an one for an ancestress, and so was kin to them by blood! Paul says she was saved by "faith" (Heb. 11:31), and James by "works." Jas. 2:25. It was an admirable instance of faith *and* works. God's willingness to have saved the inhabitants even of these "devoted" cities may be readily measured by his saving of Rahab, the most guilty one of them all. Faith saved her. Faith could have saved the rest.

Practical.

1.—The ban has been pronounced upon all those who have not sought safety in Christ. 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8; 2 Pet. 9:12; Luke 13:3.

2.—We should not trust in our good works alone for salvation any more than Jericho in her fortifications. Gal. 2:16; 3:11; 5:4; Rom. 4:4, 5; 11:6; Eph. 2:8.

3.—Jericho had seven days of warning, but how many have been vouchsafed to us! Neh. 9:17, 30; Is. 5:4; Jer. 11:7, 11; 1 Cor. 4:14; Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3.

4.—Its days of warning passed unheeded—its destruction was sudden and awful. If we imitate its example shall we fare better? Matt. 24:37–44; Luke 12:40; 21:34–36; 1 Th. 5:2, 3; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15.

5.—The horrors of that last day—who can paint them! Matt. 25:4–46; Heb. 10:28–31; Rev. 6:16; 9:6.

6.—In Jericho there were many people more reputable and better than Rahab, yet she and her kindred alone were saved. So now; it is not the rich, the respectable, the earth-honored that are saved, but those who turn from their sins unto the Lord. Mark 2:17; 10:24, 25; Matt. 7:21; 21:28–32; Luke 7:41–48; 1 Cor. 1:27–29; 1 Tim. 6:17; Rev. 3:17, 18.

7.—God performs the work when we have the faith. Heb. 11:30; Matt. 8:13; 9:29; 17:19, 20.

8.—Though God's way seems foolish to us, and as a path of shame, it is better to walk in it than in our own. Ps. 37:23–25; 23:2; Prov. 20:24; Jer. 10:23; Is. 58:11; 1 Cor. 1:25; 3:19; 12:31; Heb. 12:12; Prov. 14:12.

9.—His way often does seem foolish, and, in no one thing more than his method of salvation. 1 Cor. 1:18, 23, 27; Matt. 11:25; Ps. 8:2; Is. 8:14; 1 Pet. 2:7, 8.

HYMN.

Oh, for a strong and lasting faith
To credit what the Almighty saith—
Embrace the message of his Son
And call the joys of heaven won.

Then, should the earth's foundations shake,
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steady souls shall fear no more
Than solid rocks when billows roar.

BLACKBOARD.

This is the Victory that Overcometh

THE WORLD;

Even OUR FAITH.

1 John 5:4.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Question the children, eliciting what they know about besieging a city, taking Vicksburg as an example. What preparations were necessary—guns, cannons, mortars, gun-boats, trenches, etc., etc., and yet how long it took!

2.—Jericho—how much stronger than

Vicksburg. Describe its walls so thick that houses were built upon them. The Israelites had no guns to batter them down—dug no trenches—raised no mounds to throw stones into the city—drew no sword—and yet conquered the place. Tell the method.

3.—Satan has a stronghold in our hearts. Did they ever try to drive out Anger? Then they know how difficult it is to get him out. Did they ever try to drive out Lying, so that they would speak only the exact truth? They never get him quite out. Or Evil Speaking? etc., etc. There are too many for us to overcome ourselves. Can we get any help? Who helped the Israelites take Jericho? Who will help us?

HYMN.

God will help me drive away
All the sins that make him grieve
If I will only to him pray,
And in his gracious word believe.

BLACKBOARD.

BE NOT AFRAID!
ONLY
BELIEVE.

Editorial Miscellany

Every time that there are five Sundays in the month we are reminded by the smallness of the space that the editorial departments are crowded into, of the old nursery rhyme:

> Tommy can't walk, and Tommy can't sit,
> For his jacket, you see, is such a tight fit.

And, so far as we can see, the present writer of the lessons does not seem a bit more disposed to favor the editorial departments than was his predecessor.

The New Year flutters down to us in robes of white, zealous to accomplish its high mission. She points us forward—to the hopeful future—not to the irremediable past. She gives us plenty of opportunities for work, but not a second for vain repinings. Her's is a mission of labor,—short, earnest, unremitting,—and imperiously she calls upon us to remember our vows of service. Great rewards she promises to those who discharge their duties with prayerful promptness and fidelity, but holds a whip of scorpions for those who, at the end of her reign, shall have to confess themselves as only well meaning sluggards. But not only does she bring hope for the future, but for the past also; for underneath the snow she has buried many a seed that did not respond last year to the faith of the husbandman, but which shall yet awake to life and fill his garners. Their burial robe is a robe of resurrection. It is a protection of the life that is under it, and a promise of the life that is to come. And so, many an effort, thought by us to be utterly fruitless, may be quietly waiting the quickening influences of some more vivifying time, and may yet reprove our unbelief by the signal wealth of some coming harvest. Let the New Year bring us a benison of Faith as well as an inspiration to labor.

We think it very probable that Mr. W. C. Gray, the managing editor of the *Interior*, is such a strong advocate of impersonal journalism that he will not like a paragraph which mentions him so particularly as this is likely to do. But The Teacher owes him a debt and means to do what it can to pay it. The fact is, that right after the great fire this periodical had no home of its own, and was wandering about Chicago with cinders in its eyes and hands in its pockets. Then came a timely letter

from Cincinnati, from an utter stranger, proffering the use of type, presses, and all other essential aid in getting to work again. THE TEACHER accepted the offer, went down to Cincinnati, washed the cinders from its eyes—in Ohio River water—went to work once more, and was helped by this man more than a certain other one that needed aid was helped by the good Samaritan. Of course the man who acted thus generously was W. C. Gray. And now that we have summered and wintered near him since he came to this city, we are not at all surprised that he acted in just that way.

WITH some good-natured bantering of THE TEACHER, which we take in good part, A. L. Vail, in the *Standard*, arraigns this journal for advocating a "Children's Sunday." But Mr. Vail's fun is very solemn as compared with the serious part of his article. For in that he objects to such a day, because it will encourage the "Young America" feeling too much! It will necessitate "class-preaching," and class-preaching is what Mr. Vail abominates, forgetting that as it now is, adult "class-preaching" has an entire monopoly of the field. Then as to that first point; here is a man who gets one hundred and four full sermon-meals a year, objecting to allowing the children—who get nothing now—to have a chance at his table once in awhile for fear they will feel too good over it! Mr. Vail, it is *too* funny —— there goes a button!

THERE is no doubt that the splendid courage of Joshua was largely due to his reliance on the assurance of Jehovah: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Had it not been for this covenant promise, no matter how strong his spirit, he might well have stood appalled at the task set before him. So with every soul that seeks to conquer itself; there seems to be nothing before it but defeat and disaster until it realizes the help there is in the Lord. To every one who enters into the service of God this help is promised. Not to Joshua only, but to us is given the pledge: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." God does not ask us to enter into covenant obligations with him unless he also enters into a covenant of help with us. And herein are our church covenants, as a rule, lamentably and censurably defi cient. They overwhelm the new convert with an oppressive sense of the solemn obligations that he is taking upon himself but give him none of Joshua's comfort. He is asked faithfully to perform duties which he feels within himself he can not fulfill. The covenant is a man-covenant entirely. It is all on one side. God does not appear in it as one of the parties thereto though it is not complete without him. Every one will see the justice of this criticism on reading the following attempt to supply the usually omitted portion of the church covenant:

> And now to you who sincerely make these solemn promises and engagements towards God, he is pleased to declare by his word that he enters into corresponding promises and engagements towards you, pledging all sufficient aid in the great work which you have undertaken, upon which you may joyfully rely. He assures to you the free and full forgiveness of your sins. He promises that he will be your God, your Father, your Redeemer, your Sanctifier, your Teacher, and your Guide. That he will defend, vindicate, and honor you when assailed and called to endure suffering and shame for his sake. That in the day of trial and temptation he will cheer and strengthen you by his sympathy and aid, and make you more than conquerors through his love. That he will cause all things to work together for your good, and that nothing shall separate you from his love. That he will come for you at death and receive you to himself. That when he shall appear in his glory for the final judgment he will exalt you to honor and an eternal reign with himself, in a kingdom which shall never end.

This is taken from the covenant of the First Congregational church of Galesburg, Ill., which is one of the few churches to recognize the fact that it takes two to make a covenant. In it man's weakness is supplemented by God's strength, and, in entering into engagements with God through his church upon earth, one does not feel that the issue wholly depends upon

himself. If every one, in taking the vows of a holy life upon him, could feel the courage of Joshua, how confident and buoyant would be his step, instead of being, as now it often is, halting and dispirited. Certainly every Christian should have all the comfort of divine aid that legitimately belongs to him, and our churches should not do him such wrong as to deprive him of it just at the beginning of his career. They make no account of "the faithful God who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him."

OUR International Secretary is after statistics with his usual dilligence. As Mr. Porter always speaks to some purpose, and, therefore, deserves attention, we hope the following notice from him will not fail in its due effect:

NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL STATISTICS. — A statistical bureau was instituted at the International Sunday School Convention held at Indianapolis in 1872. Investigation has since proved that it would be impossible to compile a complete report denominationally. Some of the leading denominations do not collect their Sunday-school statistics at all, and there are many Sunday-schools, especially in the western states, which are made up of members of various denominations. The accuracy of statistical tables collected through this bureau, therefore, must depend upon thoroughness of territorial organization, including the union schools as well as denominational. Twenty-five states, one territory, and Canada are thus organized as a whole and one state in part, viz.: East Tennessee. Some of these states have reported, and we expect full reports from all previous to the next International Convention. The following states, however, and all the territories excepting Washington, are not organized, viz.: Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Rhode Island, West Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. If there are any organizations whatever in any of these states or territories, either union or denominational in character, county or city, the secretaries thereof are urgently requested to communicate with me at once.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL MAP. — Depending, as we do, upon organization as the channel through which the statistics are to come, — and indeed, is it not through organization that Sunday-schools are to be planted in every nook and four-corner throughout our broad domain? — it is of the first importance that we *know our field*. To this end, a map is being prepared which is intended to present a bird's-eye view of all the Sunday-school organizations, both union and denominational, in the United States and Canadas. There are many such organizations that are not known to this bureau. Let every Sunday-school organization, therefore, see to its representation on the "International Sunday School Map." In this manner, brethren, you may make your identity as an organization known to the great representative body of Sunday-school workers. In the organized States reports will be by state secretaries. All other Sunday-school organizations are requested to report directly to this bureau without delay, giving the territorial boundary of organization, and the statistics if you have them.

E. PAYSON PORTER, Chicago.
Statistical Secretary International Sunday School Convention.

*** Sunday-school journals are requested to copy the above, and send a copy of journal containing the same to the International Secretary.

THAT was rather a clever illustration on the utility of memorizing even without understanding, made by the *Baptist Teacher*. Referring to his schoolboy-life, the editor says: "Twice a day we all bent over Walker, who was then the standard, and swayed backwards and forwards in our seats while we conned six mortal columns of the dictionary lesson." "We did not learn," he says, "nor did our teachers care to have us learn the meaning of the words, but we did *learn to spell*." His deduction from this our readers can anticipate: that if it be a good thing to memorize mere words, with the expectation that sometime they will be filled with meaning, it will also be advisable to memorize the letter of the Scriptures, with the same hope in view. Like the editor of the *Baptist Teacher* we have a vivid recollection of those spelling contests, and many a time, when not yet in our teens, have held our own in spelling-school, among words so long that it was like bumping down a pair of stairs to get to the end of one, and whose meaning we never dreamed of finding out. With a fondness for those days fully equal to his, we confess, nevertheless, that we were much gratified, the other day, when we took up a book belonging to our boy, and found that his reading and his spelling keep progressive company! He understands the words he spells, and puts to immediate and accurate use

what he learns to spell. He stows away no word monstrosities, and has no need to. "Sufficient unto the day is the spelling thereof." We believe the modern method is an improvement. What does the *Baptist Teacher* think of it?

ONE of the best evidences of progress in the Sunday-school work for 1874 is the fact that there has been scarcely a single gathering in any of the denominational bodies, from General Assemblies, Councils, Associations, and Conventions down to the merest local assemblages, but what have given a portion of their time to the consideration of the Sabbath-school question. Awhile ago a few men with "Sunday-school on the brain" used to drum-and-fife a few people together to talk about this matter, and were set down as crack-brained enthusiasts. But their persistent drumming has rallied such a host around them that now every denomination has gone to drum-and-fifing on its own account, and the result is that, like England's roll-call, this Sunday-school reveille is reaching around the world.

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

MRS. J. E. MCCONAUGHY tells in the *Sunday School Times* of an experience she had in securing from her class a permanent welcome for a scholar whom they regarded as their inferior. Unfortunately that one is not the only scholar who has been made to feel that his is not the cordial reception that the others receive. And this repelling air is not only openly manifested by the class, but often is poorly concealed by the teacher himself. Alas, for the Unwelcome Scholar!——Bishop Simpson says: "I am satisfied that the day is coming when in our church, and in all the churches of the world, we shall look chiefly to the conversion of childhood, and as a comparatively rare instance to the conversion of those in maturer years. The strength of the church will be put on the great work of bringing the children early to Christ, saving the precious lambs, bending their wills early, impregnating their minds with divine truth from the very beginning, and seeing God's work manifesting itself in them while they are like plants around our table. Then they grow up beautiful Christians, stable Christians, developed Christians, working Christians, loving Christians." But before these desirable things come to pass, it will be necessary that more of his cloth shall have his faith and reduce it to practice.——Rev. W. P. Breed, in the *Presbyterian at Work*, calls attention to the fact that head as well as heart is needed in teaching. A teacher whose heart has outgrown his head, he says, "is apt to spend an inordinate portion of time in exhortation to the neglect of instruction. He tries to kindle a fire without putting on the fuel. He puts powder in his gun, but no ball, making much noise yet doing no execution."——Superintendents had better look sharply after their ways and manners, for no one would care to be impaled with such a criticism as this from the pen of Rev. Geo. A. Peltz in the *Baptist Teacher:* "Poor superintending dismisses school as sheep are let out of a pen. The bar is dropped, and away they go with leap and cry, away, away, glad of freedom. Hold the school well in hand at the end. Dismiss deliberately and in order. Teach in this work, that sadly unknown thing, decorum, in the house of God. Poor superintending is the parent of poor teaching, and the grandparent of those twin sisters, poor scholarship and bad deportment."——A certain minister in a New Year's pastoral address gives this advice to his Sabbath-school teachers: "R P E R A A D Y;

SPTRUADYY; TPHRIANYK." Translated, this means: "Mix praying through all your reading, study, and thought."———The *Sunday School Journal* and we have been good friends. Nevertheless we are compelled, in view of the publishers' fearful announcement, to exhort people not to subscribe to any of the Berean periodicals; for that says: "*All subscribers must expire with March, June, September, or December!*" With such a fate in view how many will subscribe for 1875? The name will certainly have to be changed to the "Buryin'" series.———In speaking of the Chautauqua gathering we said: "The morning drum at that encampment beat a new reveille that ought to awaken the most lethargic of denominations," whereupon the *Reformed Church Messenger* remarks: "We hope the Reformed Church will hear the beat of that drum and get into the front ranks." A few more papers like the *Reformed Church Messenger* would make it do it.——— *The Journal and Messenger*, though "more and more astonished by the progress of the Sunday-school cause; the ingenuity and mother wit of the main men; the marvelous phases and aspects and bearings of Scripture they find, and the wonderful 'helps' they invent," is inclined to wonder what effect they all have upon the children. It comes to the conclusion that they do not come out in larger numbers to special meetings than they formerly did, and that "the boys have mostly seen the elephant, and are hard to excite." That paper, however, has no idea that the Sunday-school is a failure, but reads from the above the lesson that "while learning how is vastly important to successful labor, the steady, hard licks in every week's toil bring the real permanent fruits and rewards." ———*The Sabbath School Journal*, being asked if it is advisable to have an Executive Committee to attend to the business matters of the Sunday-school, replies in the affirmative, and says that it should be composed of the teachers, pastor and superintendent; should meet once a week and discuss all the interests of the school; and while together should study the lesson for the coming Sunday. It adds that "the only possible objection we can see to this plan is that it looks a good deal like a Teachers' Meeting"! ———Rev. T. M. Eddy not long ago remarked: "There's value in close stowage. Carbon makes the diamond and lump of coal. But in the one it is packed—hence crystalized—hence sparkling. In the other it is spread out. Coal is good; diamond is better." Crystals are the products of time. So compact, flashing lesson expositions are the result of long study and quiet thought. The teacher who gives a half-hour only to his lesson instead of delighting his class with the worth and brilliancy of his illustrations will find that his carbon is all coal and leaves a very black mark indeed.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK.

THE lessons for 1876 are already selected. The first quarter covers the monarchies of Saul and David; the third will be spent in Solomon and the book of Proverbs; the second and fourth will take up the Acts of the Apostles. The selections are good, but it strikes us that the teachers will want to browse longer than three months in one field before being turned into another. Once a quarter is rather often to alternate between the New and the Old Testaments. ———*The Sunday School Journal* says that the statistics of one of the most religious of our states show that only 228 Sabbath-schools out of nearly 1,100 are supported by the churches. These schools raise about $200,000 yearly, use $145,000 as expenses, and have only $55,000 to give away. The churches are

educating their children to look a great deal more sharply after No. 1 than after the heathen.——The Wesleyans, of Canada, "to eliminate all books of doubtful orthodoxy" from their Sunday-schools, and to secure good reading for them, lately adopted the plan of selecting several hundred books and sending them out to ministers for their opinions. Their ideal of a library is one with as little fiction in it as possible.——One of the latest things we have heard of is for a man to frame "a Sunday-school platform" and then be elected on it to the superintendency. That is what the *Western Christian Advocate* says took place when Mr. David A. Murphy became superintendent of the St. John's M. E. Sunday-school of Cincinnati. He had twelve planks in his platform, prominent among which were: "Double our numbers if possible;" "Provide for normal-class teaching;" "Have children's sermons every month;" "Give to the Sunday-school money, enthusiasm, sympathy." Now before too many would-be superintendents seek to define their position, let us quietly suggest that perhaps there was a real man back of that platform.——The Presbyterian Sabbath School Association of this city, we are inclined to think, knows more about its schools than any other similar body anywhere. Reason why—E. P. Porter is its statistical secretary. That man gets more solid enjoyment out of statistics than is absolutely fair.——A missionary of the American Sunday School Union writing from Texas, declares that southern political intolerance is an outgrowth of denominational bitterness, and that union Sunday-schools are so many societies for the promotion of Christian and political good feeling. Not an outrage, he says, has occurred in the vicinity of any of the thirty-five schools he has started during the past year. We do not see why political and moral reconstruction should not go hand in hand.——The Jews have also taken to fostering Sunday-schools, and the scholars will soon be singing "Jewish Hymns for Sabbath Schools and Families." *The Jewish Messenger* is already gratified to note "in some cases how, side by side with the spiritless synagogue, the Sabbath-school will spring up with life and vigor that promise well for future blossoming." Perhaps it first found that out by looking over into our camp.——They have a law in Georgia that all fines for violating the Sabbath shall go to the support of Sabbath-schools. Northern states might be the better for such laws well enforced.——Dr. Thomson's Bible class in New York re-opened, after a summer vacation, with an attendance of six hundred and seventy. His methods, as described, are of the simplest. When the hour arrives he offers a brief prayer, resumes his seat, and proceeds at once with the lesson. But the man is full of thought and information.——At the National Lutheran Sunday School Convention held at Johnstown, Pa., the words "Feed my Lambs," formed of lighted gas jets, were kept before the delegates in letters of light. We wonder how long those words, first spoken to a minister, will retain their illumination for the clerical delegates who happened to be present.

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—There is more difficulty in satisfactorily conducting reviews than the Sabbath-school leaders have been willing to admit. Their exhortations on the matter have been followed everywhere by attempts to review, but, while a few have been successful, the majority seem to have stuck and floundered in a manner woefully lacerating to their own feelings. They have been inclined to look

back upon the days of concert exercises with the same longings that the Israelites had for the flesh-pots of Egypt. But having started in the right direction it is not desirable to turn back. We learn success by failure. Don't try to be too elaborate. Follow the examples of others only so far as you know you can successfully. *Gather your materials as you go along.* And, finally, persevere, and the time soon will come when the idea of "the coming review" will be a stimulus to the scholar to learn, and lesson and review will indelibly fix the lessons in his mind.

—Now that we have made our exhortation, it may be well to give a feasible, successful example. We find one contributed to the *Congregationalist* by N. J. Squires, of Manchester, Conn. The schools in that place held "A Union Review," in which all the Sunday-schools took part. He says that as a consequence of this massing of the Sunday-school detachments in that place for review, the dreaded review Sundays are now looked forward to with pleasurable anticipations. A "review chart" hung on the pulpit, containing in an abbreviated form the titles of the lessons, golden texts, topics, etc., and suggesting the questions to be asked. Here is the effect, as recorded by him:

The answers by the schools came prompt and decisive. One was a spur to the other. The only parts that had been specially committed to memory by the scholars were the titles and the golden texts. All the rest was drawn out by questions and the aid of the chart. Lots of eyes sparkled that hour, and the little ones went away saying, "We'll study our lessons harder next quarter, and then"—the rest was meant, not said. One after another the teachers said: "That's a good thing;" "That's the way to review;" "That's what we want again;" "That chart shows us just what we've been about."

—The classes in the Green Point (Brooklyn) Presbyterian Sabbath-school of which J. N. Stearns, the publisher of the publications of the National Temperance Society, is superintendent, have each chosen names with appropriate Scripture mottoes. The infant class goes by the name of "Dewdrops" and has for its motto: "Suffer little children," etc. Another has adopted the name of "Wayside Gatherers," with the motto: "Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled." "Treasure-Seekers" is still another adopted title whose text is: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." "Picket-Guards" is one that fits well with the injunction: "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." The "Pearl Gatherers" have upon their banner: "When he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." It is easy to see that a class that had adopted a name and a motto after long cogitation, would not only take some special pride in it, but would also sensibly feel the influence of their selection.

—How to train young converts for yeomanly work in the service of the church is one of the problems for which we should be eagerly seeking a solution. Every new hint on this subject will be welcome especially if it have the authority of actual experiment behind it. Such an one is given to the *Western Christian Advocate* by a pastor who is in the habit as asking his young converts into a sort of class-meeting. His success and his method he thus narrates:

I have no form or stereotyped plan of leading. No one is required to stand when he speaks. If, however, any one prefers to rise, I make no objection. When I have found reluctance as to attending, I have said to individuals: "You need neither speak nor pray unless you feel so disposed." In one charge I persuaded twelve or fifteen young people to meet me in class. For some weeks, only two or three seemed inclined to either speak or pray; but at the end of three months nearly every one was not only ready to speak, but also to pray. And at the end of six months all of these young people were regular attendants upon and participants in the Wednesday night prayer-meeting, and were really the most reliable part of my church members.

—Ralph Wells says to infant class teachers: "Never teach a star class. If your door opens, and strangers come in, do not whisk off from your work and

say: 'We will hear that beautiful hymn that you sing so sweetly,' or, 'We will hear you repeat the 23d Psalm, that you know so perfectly.' Address the children by their true names. Do not say 'Tom,' or 'Josh,' or 'You boy in the corner,' or 'You little girl in the pink frock.'" Leave all those gentle salutations to the street-boys and the roughs.

LITERATURE.

A COPY of Bagster's Bible would long ago have been in the hands of thousands of teachers in this country had it not been that *on this side of the water* the price has been put so high as practically to operate as a prohibition. It is not in the nature of things, however, that any one house should always be able to dictate the price at which a Bible should be sold simply because it owns and issues one containing better references and helps than all others. The Bagsters might have known that competition would soon level all the differences they could make in this way, and that no one would gratefully remember the extortionate prices they exacted, or permitted their agents here to exact. Teachers need no longer sigh for the Bagster Bible with its limp covers, full and excellent references, its useful tables, and its numerous maps, for all these have been paralleled, and, in the matter of references, more than paralleled, by the *Teacher's Bible*, issued by the American Tract Society, at about half the price. They run in prices all the way from $4.00 up to $10.00. We congratulate the teachers that at last they are able to get so desirable an edition without paying an undue price for it, and that Society for taking the initiatory move in furnishing it. Chicago: American Tract Society.

ONE of the best helps on the lessons for 1875 comes from over the water. It is by W. H. Groser, and is called *Joshua and His Successors*. Part I. which covers the book of Joshua, is at hand. It is plain that the author has put some conscientious work in this effort to be of service to the teachers of the two hemispheres, and has succeeded in laying before them a great deal of compact, useful information. London: Sunday School Union. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Notes for Teachers and Scholars, by Alexander McKenzie, on the lessons for the first and second quarters, are furnished by the Congregational Publishing Society. The notes, though not exhaustive, are to the point, and add to this essential feature the likewise commendable quality of being cheap. Chicago: John Fairbanks & Co. 50c.

A NEAT little book, worthy of a special welcome, is one called *Spiritual Victory*, by Rev. William W. Patton, D.D. That title binds together a series of essays on Christian warfare and its triumphs, which formerly, in substance, appeared as editorials in the *Advance*. The book will be a comfort and an aid to many a one who is struggling to attain a higher Christian life. Boston: Congregational Publishing Society. Chicago: John Fairbank & Co.

REV. T. A. GOODWIN, a Methodist minister, has written a book on *The Mode of Man's Immortality* so at variance with the commonly received opinions of his denomination that it immediately brought him to trial for heresy, from which, we are glad to say, he was triumphantly acquitted. The book was written to prove that the resurrection was not that of the body, but only of the soul. Whatever may be a man's

opinions concerning this proposition, it will benefit him to read this work, for the argument is eminently scriptural and the style is vigorous, clear, and keenly incisive. It lacks, however, the graces of toleration, and would be better if not quite so egotistically bellicose. We hope the third edition, which we feel sure will be called for, will remedy these unfortunate blemishes. New York: J. B. Ford & Co. Chicago: Keen, Cooke, & Co. $1.25.

THE same house puts forth in new and attractive form Beecher's *Norwood, or Life in New England*, which, to our notion, is one of the cleverest things that ever came from his versatile pen. New England village life in its oddities, in its home-liness, and in its sturdy moral characteristics and fidelities was never better nor more faithfully pictured. The third series of Mr. Beecher's *Yale Lecture's on Preaching*, also issued by them, has met with cordial acceptance everywhere, and, we see, is endorsed by the most conservative of New England divines. This fact would need no mention but for the reason that as the lectures of this series were to be more specially doctrinal in their character, they were looked for a little curiously with reference to seeing in what particulars the great preacher would show his laxity of belief. No one, however, that we have noticed, has ventured any criticism since their issue, and, like their predecessors, they stand unrivalled in their wealth of thought and illustration.

MINOR MENTION.

THERE are some good, healthful stories in the book by Louise Chandler Moulton, entitled *More Bed-Time Stories*. It is good for any children's library, and has in it some very cunning and attractive illustrations by Addie Ledyard. Boston: Roberts Bros., Chicago: Keen, Cooke, & Co. $1.50. ——Coming from the same house is *Mischief's Thanksgiving, and other Stories*, by Susan Coolidge, with illustrations by the same artist. Some of the stories are amusingly grotesque, some interestingly instructive, and all rightly estimate child-character.——Nelson & Phillips, New York, (Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden,) issue *Sunday Afternoons* and *Gypsy's Travels*. The former is by Rev. E. P. Burr, who in it has succeeded quite well in his attempt to enlist and instruct the little people. The subjects—"The Soul," "The Angels," "God"—are difficult enough to handle in a way to enchain young auditors, but we think Mr. Burr has so written as to secure many a thoughtful boy and girl as a reader. The other is by Josephine Pollard, and in "Gypsy" she has portrayed a thorough, irrepressible child, who is wild enough and hard enough to manage, but who, under the right sort of influences, at last resolves to be "awful good," and means it.——*Glaucia*, a story of Athens, by Emma Leslie, published by the same house, is a tale of the early Christian times, and well reproduces the way in which the worship of the true God forced its way through the polytheisms of the nations round about, and made its way in spite of dangers and persecutions.——First and best among the books on our table from the *National Temperance Society* (Chicago: C. R. Blackall. $1.50.) is *The Life Cruise of Capt. Bess Adams*, by Julia McNair Wright. It is a tale whose merit is much above the merely goodish novel that finds its way into our Sabbath-school libraries, and the story, the author says, is no creation of fancy. It is a temperance tale that deals with Christian heroism in common lives, and is just the sort that we should put into a library.——*Esther Maxwell's Mistake*, from the same Society, is a story of a working-woman's weakness in yielding to the temptations of the cup, when burdened with a false suspicion, and her after struggles and victory over the thralldom which this indulgence brought upon her.——*Lillie, or The Little Christian's Toilet* is the fanciful title of a series of sketches for children, by Mrs. H. E. Brown, and published by the American Tract Society, the object of which is to show that Christian graces are greater beautifiers than cosmetics.——A good *Introduction to the Study of General Biology*, or, in more simple phrase, to the Laws of Life, is the one written by Thomas MacGinley, from the house of G. P. Putnam's Sons. Its design is to prepare one to study all the forms of life by the consideration of a few well-marked, typical beings around which all others naturally arrange themselves. It is well and profusely illustrated. The Putnam's Sons also publish *A Manual of Metallurgy*, by William Henry Greenwood, which is a condensed statement of the methods now practiced in the reduction of metals.——*Sacred Tropes* is a classified collection of the metaphors and figures of speech used in the Bible. Published by J. W. Goodspeed, Chicago.——*The Leader* and *The Song Monarch*, two new books published by Oliver Ditson & Co., collections of sacred and secular music for singing schools, etc., have on them as authors the well known names of H. R. Palmer, and L. O. Emerson. Chicago: Lyon & Healy.——*Our Little Ones*, by C. R. Blackall, published by the American Baptist Society, (Chicago: C. R. Blackall,) is an attractively bound volume of papers very much like *The Little Folks*. Good for a New Year's present to the youngsters. 75c.

I ought to tell you I have been especially pleased with THE TEACHER this year. The vivacity, point, and suggestiveness of the Editorial departments seem to me admirable, and he or she is a dull teacher who can not interest a class with the Lessons. I have always believed THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER has a broad place to fill, and a work of its own to do, and I am glad to see it kept well up to its work. If past usefulness and present high excellence can help to win patronage, THE TEACHER will never suffer for lack of friends. May God still bless it, and use it for his own blessed cause.

REV. J. M. GREGORY, LL. D.
Champaign, Ill.

Dear Mr. Hazard:—Permit me to say that there is danger of THE TEACHER becoming, under your critical guidance, a first-class magazine. With the ability you command, each specialty is cared for by an expert. Sunday-school literature has taken on dignity since you have exalted the standard of this periodical. It could well answer for a Family Religious Magazine, and thus bridge the chasm between the household and the Sunday-school.

It must certainly win the solid success which merit deserves, and become a *sine qua non* of Sunday-school work.

REV. W. A. BARTLETT, Chicago.

Mr. Hazard keeps THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER well up to its old standard as a magazine of good things for Sunday-school workers generally; and he has put new life into its every department. His editorship is a gain to the Sunday-school cause in America. REV. H. C. TRUMBULL,
Hartford, Ct.

I have already expressed my delight with THE TEACHER for 1874. It is more truly a *Teacher* than any Sunday-school publication I have ever seen. I scarcely see how it could be improved. Its editorials, its lessons, its articles upon topics related to the lessons, its news items, its "Teachers' Meeting," are all admirable. I have nothing but the most hearty commendation for its matter and spirit. PROF. EWD. OLNEY,
Ann Arbor, Mich.

I have carefully gone over the four numbers of this year's TEACHER. They are "first-class." Of high tone, and advanced in standing, they form volumes which no Sunday-school worker can afford to dispense with. You have my heartiest endorsement.

REV. GEORGE A. PELTZ,
Newark, N. J.

I enjoy THE TEACHER as a companion and helper in my Sunday-school work. Its atmosphere is spiritual, awakening, and elevating. I know it can not be other than instructive and encouraging to every practical and earnest Sunday-school worker who seeks its benefits. I trust its influence in the future will be none the less than in its past years of wholesome usefulness in a field that still calls for the generous activities of the Church of Christ.

E. D. JONES, St. Louis.

Having a high appreciation of THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, I desire to express to you my gratitude for furnishing so valuable an assistant and so delightful and readable a periodical for the use of teachers and superintendents.

THE TEACHER, together with the *Lesson Papers* furnish the most efficient means of Bible instruction to the Sabbath-schools. J. L. HANNA,
St. Joseph, Mo.

The fact that our teachers supply themselves with THE TEACHER *at their own expense*, instead of some cheaper, but very worthy publications, and that each copy is thoroughly used, is pretty good evidence of its worth. I hear from the teachers only commendations.

S. B. MCINTYRE, Palmyra, N.Y.

He who would *get the best* number of THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER must be a regular subscriber; for each issue seems an improvement on its predecessor since M. C. Hazard took it in charge. Some of the best and brightest things are under the editorial head.—*Independent.*

I hail the appearance of THE TEACHER with more and more eagerness every month. Its articles are scholarly, its suggestions practical, and the whole work such that every superintendent and every teacher should read and study it in preparation for each Sabbath's teaching.

Your Editorial Departments could not well be excelled, and the contributions of every issue are invaluable helps to all earnest Sunday-school workers.

A. F. NIGHTINGALE, Omaha,
Pres. of Neb. State S. S. A.

I have been a reader and admirer of THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER from its commencement, and at no period have I prized it more highly than at present. Its conductors are to be congratulated upon its honorable record and triumphant success, while our Sunday-school workers should be grateful for the existence of so valuable an aid. THE TEACHER is bright, lively, earnest, and progressive. God bless its managers and readers!

C. B. STOUT,
New Brunswick, N. J.

"So much good sense, wisdom, and pertinence is not usually put by one editor into a single current publication, be it daily, weekly, or monthly."—*S. S. Times.*

I have been much gratified with the continued evidence of progress as exhibited in the issues of THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER for the current year. Its abundant and excellent provision of lesson material well entitles it to its high and growing position with the fraternity of teachers. Its editorials are characterized by vigor and thoughtfulness of style, and its articles generally must be admirably suited to the wants of its large and increasing list of subscribers. Your magazine has my warmest wishes for its continued and increasing success.

JAMES H. KELLOGG,
Troy, N. Y.

"THE NATIONAL TEACHER must stop its compact, brilliant, alluring way of putting news, and hints, and lesson notes, or it will deserve too large a circulation, and get what it deserves. —*Sunday School Journal.*

Could not run my Sunday-school without it; or at least should not *dare to try.*

ROLAND T. OAKES, Chicopee, Mass.

In our household THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER has been a welcome study for years, and we are glad to bestow our word of praise on the increasing value of its pages. The editorials in the Gleanings, Miscellany, and Teachers' Meeting, are inspiring in their vivacity and hopefulness.

FAITH LATIMER, Louisville, Ky.

THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER is winning golden opinions and deserving them, too. Under its present management it is fresh, interesting, and able.—*Christian Mirror.*

You don't know how glad I am that I can give to each of the teachers in the Congregational Sunday-school (the church pays the bill) so good a magazine as THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. It is of great value not only as a help in the preparation of the lesson, but because of the excellent reading matter to be found in every number. Every Sunday-school worker in the land will do better service for the Master when he gets all the good he may out of THE TEACHER.

WALTER C. TISDELL,
Painesville, Ohio.

THE

NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

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A SUNDAY SCHOOL ESSENTIAL.

BY REV. HENRY CLAY TRUMBULL.

THE sooner it is understood that no true Sunday-school—one complete and well-appointed—is possible without a preliminary Teachers' Meeting, or Preparation and Training Class, the better it will be for all who are in the Sunday school as teachers or scholars. Of course, you can have a gathering of young and old on the first day of the week without this essential, and call it a "Sunday-school," just as you can have one without any division of its membership into classes, or any study of the Bible as its principal exercise; but in neither case is the gathering competent to do true Sunday-school work, as that work is understood by the readers of THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, to whom these words are addressed. Some months since, I looked up a new German Sunday-school in New York city, of which I had been told. I found in it a number of bright boys, under a single teacher, practising gymnastics after the method of the German *Turners*, and that was all. It *was* a "Sunday-school;" yet it was *not* a "Sunday-school." It was a school held on Sunday, but it was not such a school as is now commonly called a Sunday-school by evangelical Christians; not a school of the sort to which I refer when I say there can be no true Sunday-school without a Teachers' Meeting.

What are the distinct peculiarities of the true Sunday-school, as we understand the term in its best sense? An assembly of children and youth, (with or without adults), for religious exercises, is not necessarily a Sunday-school. That may be a Children's Meeting, or a Sunday-school Concert, or a Prayer and Conference Meeting. The addition of social Bible study does not as a matter of course make it a Sunday-school. That may turn it into a social expository service, or a Bible Reading session. Even if questions are freely asked by the leader and answered by the assembly the meeting may still lack an essential Sunday-school characteristic; for the old catechetical exercise of our ancestors secured all this without being a proper Sunday-school. The modern Sunday-school idea includes the grouping of children and others into separate classes, under particular teachers, for Bible study and instruction, and the combining of those classes or separate groups, into a school-whole, for common influences and co-work. Without the grouping into classes there is no opportunity of reaching the

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scholars individually. Without the combining of the groups into a common whole, there is no unity of impression on the entire assembly. In a true Sunday-school there must be both class-work and school-work; class-instruction and school-instruction; class-influence and school-influence. All this can not be secured unless the leaders of the separate groups are brought together, that they may have a common understanding and may come into a fullness of mutual sympathy and purpose; and this bringing together makes the Teachers' Meeting. It is more than twenty-six centuries since the prophet Amos asked: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" and in all this time his question has never been answered affirmatively. Another fair question just here is: "Can two be agreed unless they come together?"

The best superintendent in the world will fail to have a first-class Sunday-school without a Teachers' Meeting. Unless he meets his teachers by themselves he can neither know them fully nor fairly impress his views and character upon them for their work under his direction. The superior efficiency of an army over a mob is not in its leadership so much as in its organization. The most brilliant commander would not expect to transform a mob into an army unless he could have all its materials under officers whom he had trained for the work, or whom he expected to guide and control therein. Nor would he consent to new movements with his new army without councils in which he studied, gauged and instructed his subordinates. The Sunday-school without a Teachers' Meeting is nearer the standard of a mob than of an army, whoever is its leader. The Teachers' Meeting is both the officers' school and the council of war in the Sunday-school army. "Without counsel purposes are disappointed," and "Where no counsel is the people fall," said Solomon; and he knew what he was talking about. The wisest men since Solomon—men wise as "children of this world," or as "children of light"—have been quick to recognize the value of counsel in councils in all organized work for aggressive action. Brigham Young gathers his Mormon local preachers and Sunday-school teachers of Salt Lake City, each Saturday afternoon at the Tabernacle, to instruct them as to what they are to preach and teach the next day. Without some such opportunity of leading those who are leading others he could not retain his present power over the Mormon masses, nor could he keep that people a compact and united sect, as they now are. Indeed, as Solomon again says: "Every purpose is established by counsel;" and his "*every* purpose" is broad enough to include Sunday-school work.

Not that the superintendent is a military commander and that his Teachers' Meeting enables him to drill and discipline his school through his subordinates, is this agency a Sunday-school essential; nor yet that he may tell his teachers dogmatically just what they are to teach, and so have one voice and one view of truth in each and every class in the school, is it to be desired. It is, rather, that he may study and help his teachers, so that they may do their own best work in the best way, that the Teachers' Meeting is a necessity to the highest usefulness of every Sunday-school. How, otherwise, can a superintendent know the ability and the need of his teachers severally? or see the fitness of some for other classes than they now have? How else can he bring up the standard of his poorer teachers, and improve the teaching of his best ones? How, besides, can he make available all the culture of the highest and the enthusiasm of the most devoted? Through what other agency can he both sift and train his teachers? Even with a Teachers' Meeting a superintendent should not seek to bring and bind his teachers to an arbitrary standard of his fixing. Without this means of access to them he is hardly more than a figure-head in the school, or, at the best, the leader of

its general exercises, having little knowledge of, and less influence over the teaching in the separate classes. The class-teaching may be very good or very poor, or both good and poor, for all that he knows and does; practically there are as many schools as there are classes under his oversight. There is no one school-current or school-standard of teaching there. The teachers do not come together to be agreed; hence they are not "workers together;" not "fellow helpers to the truth."

Before the uniform lesson plan prevailed in our Sunday-schools, each class was likely to be on its own hook in its subject of study. There was, as a result, no unity of thought in the school; no possibility of general school-exercises appropriate and timely alike to all. *That* difficulty is largely remedied now. The next need is yet to be recognized as clearly and widely. A Teachers' Meeting in every Sunday-school is as important to the efficiency of Sunday-school teaching as is a uniform lesson to intelligent and beneficial study in that school.

The advantage to the teachers themselves for their class-work, in addition to the gain to the scholars as a whole, by their assembling each week for conference over the next Sunday's lesson, can hardly be over-estimated. That the poorer teachers need such help all will admit. That the best teachers ought to have it is quite as true, even if not as obviously so. Both as to knowledge and zeal we are quickened by contact with our fellows. "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor"—in study. As "iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend"—in a teachers' meeting. "God has ordained the commerce of wisdom for mutual benefit" says Bridges; and old Matthew Henry adds: "Two eyes see more than one. * * * Wise and profitable discourse sharpens men's wits; and those who have ever so much knowledge, may, by conference, have something added to them." Dr. John H. Vincent, or Ralph Wells, or B. F. Jacobs, or Henry P. Haven, however thoroughly he had studied his lesson, would be better fitted for its teaching in his Sunday-school after an hour over it in a meeting with his fellow teachers, than he could hope to be without such conference. And so, I am confident, all such teachers as *these* would say; although many less competent feel above the need of any consultation with their co-workers in preparation for teaching. To the best informed as to the poorest, the injunction is in order: "Come to the Teachers' Meeting with your stores of wisdom and grace, on your own account as well as for your humbler associates, 'that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality; as it is written: He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.'" And as to zeal and enthusiasm in the Sunday-school teacher's work, the question of the inspired preacher, "How can one be warm alone?" seems timely and pertinent. The apostle's exhortation should, moreover, be remembered: "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." There is greater need of this now than ever before.

In my opinion, there is no other need so great in the line of methods or work in the Sunday-school cause, to-day, as that of regular and well-conducted Teachers' Meetings, in every part of our country. This agency is even more important than Teachers' Institutes and normal classes—valuable as they are; for the teachers already in the Sunday-schools, with their present attainments, require to be brought into one spirit, and to be led to work efficiently together, even more than they require higher

mental culture and increased stores of accumulated Bible knowledge. The greatest trouble with the most devoted of the teachers now in the Sunday-school is, not that they are so poorly informed, but that they use their knowledge to so little purpose for the good of the entire school. The Normal Class and Institute are likely to give them more knowledge and to tell them how to use it. The Teachers' Meeting brings all that they *do know*, and all that they *are*, directly into service for the benefit of their associates, and the welfare of their school.

As to the many difficulties in the way of starting and sustaining a Teachers' Meeting—the troubles of time and place in a scattered community, of order of exercises, and mode of conduct—they will be met and overcome one by one when superintendents and teachers are convinced that the Teachers' Meeting is really a *necessity* to a true and well appointed Sunday-school. If all the teachers can not be induced to come, let the superintendent be glad that he can have a Teachers' Meeting with only one in ten of his teachers present. *That* will be a great improvement on none. If all can not assemble in one place during the week, let the teachers meet in groups, as in neighborhood prayer-meetings, on a week-day or evening, and then come together on Sunday at the Sunday-school room for final conference before their school session. The *way* will be found when the *purpose* is positive.

At the Chautauqua Lake Assembly, in August last, out of 137 in attendance at a sectional gathering of superintendents, 135 expressed the deliberate conviction that a weekly Teachers' Meeting is indispensable to the success of a Sunday-school; that however much may be done by individual teachers in their classes without the inspirations and helps of such a meeting, there can be no real *school* life and character to the assembly of classes unless the teachers are brought together frequently to profit by one another's methods, and to be guided and shaped through the influence of an intelligent leadership. If this view of the case be the correct one—as can scarcely be questioned—why, in this new year 1875, shall not every Sunday-school which has the advantage of the same lesson for all its scholars have the further essential of a true Sunday-school—a weekly Teachers' Meeting?

JOSHUA AS A GENERAL.

BY REV. E. F. WILLIAMS.

PALESTINE has been the favorite battle-field of the world. Over its sacred soil have marched the armies of Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Arabians, Turks, Crusaders, French, English. Even in the time of Abraham its inhabitants seem to have occupied the land as the conquerors of a more primitive people. It is only natural that these various and not over friendly races should yield to the valor and skill of a soldier like Joshua.

That Israel did not advance from Kadesh is a mark of military wisdom. This course, which seems the natural one, would have brought the armies face to face with the giants—and with the strongest mountain fortresses of the land, By journeying southward, and northward on the desert side of Mt. Seir, the formidable foes of southern Palestine were deceived into the belief that Israel had despaired of being able to overcome them.

The plan seems to have been to pierce the country at its center, and at its weakest point, and at the same time secure a safe base for future operations. Therefore the conquest begins, as Stanley

suggests, by the passage of the brook Zered. The triumphs over Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and the Midianites under Balak and Balaam, on *the east* of the river, with the occupation of their territory by the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, prepared the way for the capture of Jericho. The rich pasture lands of Bashan were secured as a basis of supply for future need, the rear of the army was protected from the attack of a prowling foe. Without these victories it would not have been possible to have made Gilgal the center of supplies for the war.

It is only after these substantial advantages have been gained that Joshua is called to the chief command. Of his fitness for the position there can be no doubt. Taste and education have prepared him to lead in war. He is neither a prophet nor a lawgiver. Unlike Moses, he has no power to *create* a nation. He is simply a skillful military commander. He first attracts our notice in the battle with Amalek, at Rephidim. He is the active spirit in this defence. He selects his soldiers, and controls all their movements. As "the minister of Moses," he exhibits a soldier's sensitiveness for his master's honor. He can not endure irregularity, even in the religious service of the camp. Hence his desire for the rebuke of Eldad and Medad (Num. 11:28). As one of those sent by Moses to spy out the land, he brings back a report which shows that he has studied both topography and people as a man of war.

It is probable that his military qualities began to appear at an early age. He may have been one of the Hebrew overseers in Egypt, and have had something to do with the preparation of his people for flight. At any rate they went out of servitude as a regularly organized army. This organization was continued and perfected in the wilderness. Every day's experience, therefore, gave Joshua an opportunity to gratify and strengthen his military taste. When the Lord called him to the command of the armies of Israel, it is altogether likely that the representatives of the tribes recognized his eminent fitness for the place, and looked upon him as just the man to lead an *army of invasion*, for such in fact it was. Canaan was to be occupied as the reward of personal valor, and after stubborn fighting.

The *charge* which both Moses and the Lord gave Joshua was a charge which had reference to his military duties (Deut. 31:7, 23). The vision by which his courage was stimulated at the beginning of his campaign was the vision of "a man with a drawn sword." He received a divine appointment "to drive out the inhabitants of the land." To be sure his methods of warfare are somewhat different from those of Wellington or Napoleon. But they accomplish their objects, because they are divinely suggested.

Joshua is confident of success, because the invisible Jehovah is the real leader of the host. He is only second in command,—simply executes the orders of his superior officer. This fact is understood throughout the army, and adds immensely to the strength of his position. Every person in the vast encampment feels that the war is in the interests of religion. It is quite in accordance with the popular expectation that Joshua should be divinely honored at its very commencement. There is no manifest surprise at the miraculous passage of the Jordan, nor at the *religious* preparation for active service, which immediately follows. The name of the camp on the west side of the river, Gilgal, i. e. Liberty, is a reminder of the reproach which is "rolled away" by the circumcision of the males, and the renewal of the covenant. That the passover should be celebrated, the manna cease, and the people "eat of the old corn of the land," excite no surprise in the minds of those who serve under Joshua. Still it is evident enough that these religious services—this cultivation of the religious sentiment—were a great help to the *morale* of the army.

But while Joshua takes special pains to bring Israel into right relations with the Lord, he takes the very steps which a wise military commander would have taken to ascertain the position and strength of the enemy. While the religious services have been going on in the camp, spies have penetrated into the city of Jericho, and are now ready with their report. It is to the effect that the enemy are suffering from a panic, brought about by the belief that He who dried up the Red Sea, conquered the mighty kings of the east, and opened the waters of the Jordan, will give his people the whole land of Canaan.

Were anything more required to convince the Israelites of the righteousness of their cause, and of the importance of a strict obedience to the command of their leader, it is furnished in the speedy capture of Jericho. That city, the key to the country, falls into their hands — not as the result of a regular siege, but as an act of divine favor. True Joshua observes the form of a siege. He marches round the city again and again, till it has been compassed about thirteen times; but neither he nor his soldiers think of ascribing its fall to any power of man.

This sudden and easy victory seems to have raised the enthusiasm of the soldiers to the highest pitch. They are sure that nothing can stand before them. The set back at Ai is just what they need. The spies report a feeble city — with few men to defend it. Joshua regards its capture as a matter of course, and is greatly surprised at the defeat which he suffers. This defeat brings him back to the Lord, and opens his eyes to the sinfulness of Israel. By a military order, to which he assigns a divine origin, the guilty party, together with his whole family is put to death. The second attack upon Ai is planned with very great care. A vast army is marched against the place. Its situation favors an ambush. One is laid, and the siege begun under the eye of Joshua himself. Just when the enemy think themselves victorious, a shout is raised — the burning city, and an attack in the rear proclaim their defeat. Thus the passes into the center of Palestine are secured, and all possibility of a combination of the kings of the north and of the south is cut off.

To strengthen the religious sentiment of Israel, and perhaps to increase the terror of his enemies, Joshua marches into the very heart of their country. He gathers the tribes at Shechem, and stationing half of them on Ebal and half on Gerizim, reads out to them, in obedience to God's command, the blessings and curses of the law (Josh. 8: 30–35).

The third great battle grows out of an unauthorized league with the Gibeonites. The advance of Joshua has been without a parallel. The panic-stricken inhabitants have made almost no resistance to his arms. Under the lead of the adventurous king of Jerusalem, five chieftains of the south now unite, and lay siege to Gibeon. Messengers from the beleagured city are sent to Gilgal to ask for relief. A forced march — which accomplishes a three days' journey in one — brings Joshua and his armies to the scene of conflict. The siege is raised, the allied kings flee for their lives. Their armies try to make a stand at Beth-horon, but are conpletely overthrown. A severe hail storm (Joshua 10: 11) precipitates their defeat, and the lengthening of the day gives Joshua time to secure the full control of the pass through the mountains to the sea. The terrrified kings are brought from their hiding-place and put to death. The capture of the cities, one by one, follows; and as the result of pressing the advantages of a single victory, the whole south is secured for the army of the Lord.

Stanley reckons this battle of Beth-horon among the most important in the history of the world. He says:

"It is one of the few military engagements which belong equally to ecclesiastical and civil history, which have decided equally the fortunes of the world, and of the church. The role will be complete if to these we add two or three more which we encounter in Jewish history; and in later times

the battle of the Milvian Bridge, which involved the fall of Paganism; the battle of Poitiers, which sealed the fall of Arianism; the battle of Bedr, which secured the rise of Mahometanism in Asia; the battle of Tours, which checked the spread of Mohometanism in Western Europe; the battle of Lepanto, which checked it in Eastern Europe; the battle of Lutzen, which determined the balance of power between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany."

The issue of this battle determined the kings of the north to make a united effort to check the progress of Joshua's victories. Jabin, the king who reigns in Hazor, is the head of the league. The armies gather at the waters of Merom, in the very center of the territory under their control, and number, according to Josephus, 300,000 footmen 10,000 horsemen, and 20,000 chariots of iron. The Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, the Hivite, are there: every soldier that Jabin's wide-extended influence can reach.

We are not told by what route Joshua marched his troops to this distant spot, what provision he made for their supply, only that he made a *sudden* attack upon Jabin's army, and routed it completely. The kings and the cities of the kings fell into his hands—"with very great spoil." "So," in about seven years, "Joshua took all that land, the hills and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same; even from the mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon, and all their kings (31 in number, 12:24,) and slew them." (Josh. 11:16, 17.) He cut off the Anakim also from their strongholds in the mountains, and thus took military possession of the "whole land."

The armies were disbanded—the forces furnished by the tribes residing on the east of the Jordan returning thither—and the captured territory, after a careful measurement by skillful surveyors, was divided, under the direction of the conqueror, among the remainder of the tribes.

From this brief review of the conquest it is evident that Joshua's campaigns are planned and executed with true military genius. He secures Gilgal as a base of supplies, and an encampment for those who can not go out to battle. It is so situated that the south and the north can not combine without his knowledge; nor can their kings march rapidly enough to assist each other, when he chooses to attack them in their cities.

First, he pierces the center of the hostile territory—captures Jericho, Ai, and Bethel; opens a road to sacred Shechem—and leisurely awaits an opportunity to fall upon the kings of the south. Taking advantage of the combination against Gibeon, with Bedouin rapidity, he falls upon the assailants, and by a single stroke makes himself master of the south. The suddenness and thoroughness of his attack are equally apparent in his campaign against the kings of the north. He marches as one who knows every inch of the country, as one who feels that it belongs to him, as one whose Christian fidelity is proven, if I may so say, by the unsparing slaughter he makes of his enemies. In this he is a striking type of Him who shall go forth "conquering and to conquer" till all his enemies are trodden under his feet.

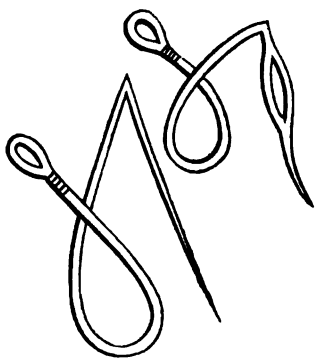
ANCIENT HEBREW WARFARE.

OF the military affairs of the Hebrew nation very little can be ascertained beyond the information conveyed incidentally in the Old Testament Scriptures. Such allusions, however, are numerous, and impart many facts of interest.

We shall err considerably if we attempt to weave these scattered references into a complete system, regardless of

chronological order. The army of Josiah or Ahab was a different organization from that which Joshua led against the Amalekites in the wilderness. David seems to have effected various improvements, to which Solomon and other kings made additions from time to time, and important modifications must have attended the gradual introduction of metal armor.

The patriarchal weapons of offence were the sword and the bow (Gen. 48:22), the armor probably no more than a leathern cap and breastplate, or jerkin, the latter, in some cases, of quilted linen, and the former of plaited rushes. For defence there was the shield—of wicker, covered with hides, or occasionally of wood. After the Egyptian bondage we naturally look for traces of the influence of the elaborate military system which prevailed under the Pharaohs, and from which it is easy to draw illustrations of Hebrew warfare as practised under Joshua and his successors. "The offensive weapons of the Egyptians," says Sir Gardner Wilkinson, "were the *bow*,



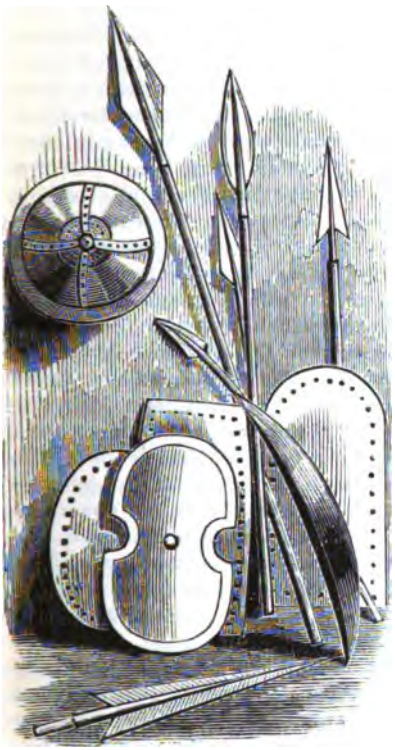
EGYPTIAN SLINGS.

spear, two species of *javelin*, *sling*, a short and a straight *sword*, *falchion*, *axe* or *hatchet*, *battle-axe*, *pole-axe*, *mace* or *club*, and the *lissan*, a curved stick similar to that still in use among the modern Ethiopians. Their defensive arms consisted of a helmet of metal, or a quilted headpiece, a *cuirass*, or coat of armor—made of metal plates or quilted with metal bands—and an ample *shield*. But they had no *greaves*, and the only coverings to the arms were a part of the cuirass, forming a short sleeve and extending about halfway to the elbow." The Biblical references to the Hebrew soldiery accord remarkably with this enumeration.

The bow and arrows, originally used in the chase, long maintained their preeminence among the Hebrews. As in the Egyptian army, the bowmen formed the chief strength of the force, and it is probable that they contributed largely to the repeated defeats of the Canaanitish tribes. The bow was ordinarily of wood, but sometimes of metal. Zophar and David speak of a bow of steel (Job 20:24; Psa. 18:34). It was bent by pressure with the foot. The bowstring was of sinews, the arrows usually of reeds, tipped with metal or stone points, and feathered. Like the old English archers, the Egyptians could propel a "cloth-yard shaft" to a great distance, but its length was generally about one-fourth less. The quiver was carried on the shoulder. The bowman was provided with a sword for close quarters—probably, like the Egyptian sword, a straight short instrument, from two and a half to three feet in length, and adapted both to cut and thrust. It was worn in the girdle on the left side(1 Sam. 18:4). Daggers were also used in both countries; they were shaped like the sword, but much shorter. Ehud's dagger seems to have been unusually long—the reason, perhaps, why its dimensions are stated (Judg. 3:16).

The spear was from five to six feet long, and formed of wood with a metal head, and sometimes a point at the other end, as in the cases of Saul and Abner (1 Sam. 26:7). Javelins—probably of both light and heavy kinds—were also used for throwing and for thrusting (2 Sam. 2:23). Joshua is usually described as holding a javelin in his hand, Josh. 8:18, (rendered "spear" in the English Bible). Maces ("maul" in Prov. 25:18) and battle-axes were common among the Egyptians, but seem to

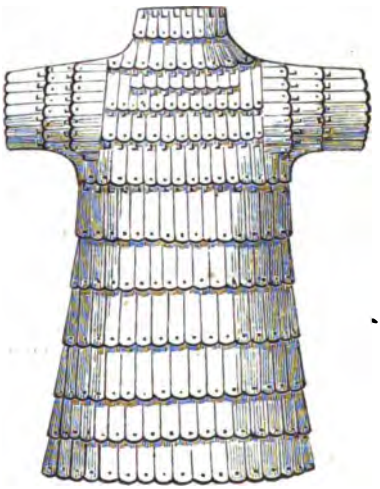
have been but little used by the Hebrews. The "rod of iron" (Psa. 2:9) of the Psalmist may denote an iron-bound mace.



JEWISH SPEARS AND SHIELDS.

Slingers were attached to the forces, and wielded a weapon by no means contemptible in skillful hands. The Benjamites—like the more classic Rhodians—were especially famed for their achievements with this ancient arm, as well as with the bow (Judg. 20:16; 1 Chron. 12:2). It was made of twisted or plaited thongs of leather.

The soldier's chief means of defence was the shield, of which there were at least two kinds—the one large, which the heavy-armed infantry carried, the other smaller, and adapted for more rapid movements (1 Kings 10:16, 17; 2 Chron. 14:8). The former was associated with the spear, and the latter with the bow or sword; the one might be called the "shield" and the other the "buckler," but that our translators have not preserved uniformity in their renderings. The Egyptian shield was of the the well-known "tombstone" shape—oblong, rounded at the upper end, and decreasing slightly in width towards the base; it was made of leather stretched on a wooden frame. Probably this furnished a model for the Hebrew weapon, which was likewise held by a thong stretched across the inside, while on the outside—contrary to the Egyptian practice—there was a boss, or projection. As among the Greeks, it was considered a disgrace to lose the shield in battle (2 Sam. 1:21). Shields of metal, or covered with metal plates, seem to belong to a later time than that of the Judges (2 Sam. 8:7). The same may perhaps be said of metal helmets (1 Sam. 17:5, 38)—first mentioned in the cases of Goliath and Saul; the usual material being leather, quilted linen, or wickerwork. The coat of mail, or "habergeon," is of much earlier date, as we might



COAT OF MAIL.

expect from its common use in Egypt. It was a sort of shirt, with very short sleeves, of quilted linen, and covered—at least in some cases—with scales or plates of metal, which allowed freedom of motion, yet furnished an effectual

protection from an ordinary thrust. The breastplate and girdle appear to have been made of similar materials—leather or quilted stuffs.

Among the early Israelites there was no military caste as in Egypt; all able-bodied men between the ages of twenty and fifty, with certain exceptions specified by Moses (as the timid and those newly settled in life, Numb. 1:3; Deut. 20:5–9,) were called upon to bear arms when needful, levies being made according to the service required. It was in the wilderness, no doubt, that the Israelitish militia was first organized and disciplined into a military force. The subdivisions, as in the Greek and Roman armies, were on a decimal scale. We read of captains of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens; and if, as some writers suppose, it was the practice to march in column five abreast, it is evident that two companies of fifty would make a solid square, and that larger masses could be readily formed. At first the divisions appear to have been tribal, but this must afterwards have been discontinued: each tribe had its appropriate standard (Numb. 1:52; 2:2).

The people were summoned by sound of trumpets, and the levies were led into action with the same instruments of music, but they do not seem to have adopted the Egyptian drum. It was usual to commence the attack with singing and shouting; and on certain occasions we read of the Levites chanting at the head of the troops. The army was usually drawn up in three divisions, a center and two wings (1 Sam. 11:11; 2 Sam. 17:2). The camp was circular (1 Sam. 17:20, Heb. "*circle*," not "trench"), unlike that of the Egyptians and Romans, which was square or oblong; and during action it was customary to leave it in charge of a reserve corps. Of manœuvering there was probably very little, the Hebrew warriors, like the heroes in Homer, engaging in single combats with their enemies. The slingers and archers, however, fought in companies, and it is possible that the Israelites may have imitated the phalanx, or solid mass of heavy infantry, armed with spears and shields—an arrangement well known to the Egyptians, and afterwards brought to perfection by the Greeks and Macedonians. Some such phalanx appears to be referred to in the account of the battle in Moab in Elisha's days, and through which the Moabite swordsmen were unable to penetrate to the Edomite center (2 Kings 3:26). But, as already stated, the issue of a contest largely depended on the execution done by the light infantry, and especially the bowmen, who, as in Egypt, probably commenced the engagement. Saul fell by the arrows of the Philistines, Ahab by those of the Syrians, and Josiah by those of the Egyptians (1 Sam. 31:3; 1 Kings 22:34; 2 Chron. 35:23). No doubt, it was by means of this important weapon that the Hebrew forces were able to contend successfully against the chariots of the Canaanites (Deut. 20:1).

After the introduction of chariots and cavalry by Solomon, the bow was used by the riders, as in the case of Jehu, in this also following the practice of the Egyptians (2 Kings 9:24).

It is not certain in what manner the light and heavy troops were disposed in action; but in all likelihood the archers, slingers, and other light-armed combatants occupied the wings, while the spearmen, bearing the large shield, formed the center.

The simpler operations of a siege appear to have been known to the Israelites in the wilderness, for they were forbidden to use fruit-trees for making "bulwarks," to "employ in the siege;" only timber trees being allowed for that purpose (Deut. 20:19, 20). These were employed to form entrenchments for the besiegers. In Abimelech's time we read of citadels within the fortified cities of Shechem and Thebez (Judg. 9:49, 51); and in the reign of David, the practice of "casting up a bank," on which to push forward battering-rams, is distinctly alluded to in the account of the siege of Abel (2 Sam. 20:15).

It would be the extreme of skepticism to doubt that whatever knowledge the Israelites possessed at the Conquest respecting siege operations, or the fortifying of cities, had been derived from contact with the great military people whose iron yoke they had so recently cast off. Among the representations of the wars of the early Pharaohs with Asiatic nations, depicted on the walls of Thebes, are those of fortified cities, belonging, as Sir G. Wilkinson believes, to the northernmost Hittites. Looking at both these sources of information, the following conclusions may be drawn with tolerable confidence:

The fenced cities of the Canaanites, which the Hebrews had to assail, were probably quadrangular, surrounded by a single, or in some cases a double wall, flanked by lofty towers, with ditches and ramparts to hinder the advance of the besiegers. The wall was frequently raised on a terrace, or basement; and when, as in the case of the Canaanite strongholds, the natural situation was on a lofty eminence, we can readily understand the phrase used by the Hebrew spies, "cities walled up to heaven." Some of the Hittite fortresses were surrounded by a single or double moat, crossed by drawbridges, like those of our more modern feudal castles.

The attack on such "fenced cities" was by regular investment or immediate escalade. In the latter case the besiegers endeavored to effect a breach in the walls by means of battering rams, or by dislodging the stones with long spears. They advanced under cover of moveable frames (*testudos*), covered with hides, and large enough to conceal and protect a body of men. If the fortifications proved too strong for breaching or mining, attempts were made to bring the besieged to submission by circumvallation, cutting off the supplies from without, and awaiting the sure influence of famine (2 Kings 7: Luke 19:43). The sieges of Samaria by Ben-hadad, and of Jerusalem by Titus, will at once recur as memorable instances.

In attempting to carry a fortress by assault, the attacking force advanced under cover of the archers, and applied scaling-ladders, mounting, if necessary, on the roofs of the *testudos*. They also sought to pry open the gates with spears and axes; or if they were of wood, fire was sometimes applied, as we learn from the conduct of Abimelech (Judg. 9:48).

On the whole, we may remark that, taking the most favorable view of the military skill of Joshua and his successors, of the valor and discipline of the Hebrew soldiers, and of the nature of the training afforded by their nomadic experiences in the wilderness; granting also all that facts will fairly warrant in respect to the possible inferiority of the Canaanites to the Phœnicians:—the conquest of Palestine, nevertheless, was a task far too formidable to have been accomplished by the unaided efforts of the tribes of Israel. Such was the deliberate judgment of their single-hearted leader: "JEHOVAH your God is He that hath fought for you" (Josh. 23:3). And such was the deliberate response of the veterans who had marched under his banner: "JEHOVAH drove out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land; therefore will we serve JEHOVAH; for He is our God" (Josh. 24:18).—*Groser's "Joshua and His Successors."*

THE TRAINING OF YOUNG CONVERTS.

BY REV. J. M. GREGORY, LL. D., REGENT ILLINOIS INDUSTRIAL UNIVERSITY.

IN the strong and beautiful conceptions of the Bible, that change in the human soul which turns it from the life of selfishness and sin to the higher, spiritual life, is a NEW BIRTH. The change from a career controlled by the natural appetites and passions to a life inspired by the example of the Saviour

and by the love of God, is as if one should enter upon a new existence — new-born, and fresh like little children. Strong as is this figure, few that have studied the phenomenon of the spiritual life will regard it as exaggerated or untrue. The actual process in that radical change called conversion, varies as widely as the characters, education, and circumstances of individuals. To some it comes amidst the tumults of the most excited sensibilities, with agonies of remorse and terrible conflicts of doubts and fears. To others it is but the calm awakening to better convictions, to the clear vision and choice of the better way. To others, still, and these most frequently children, it is the stealing in of new and better feelings, the quiet reception of new and holy sentiments of divine love, and the awakening of the soul to the new and ardent desire to serve God. But whatever its form or concomitants, the change is always essentially the same, always radical and entire as a birth, placing the whole soul in a new attitude, and endowing it with a new life. The spirit has been born again. It is an infant once more,—not indeed in general knowledge, nor in physical or intellectual strength. In these it remains nearly unchanged; but in spiritual affairs it has entered upon a life where it has everything to learn, and where it must receive nourishment, cultivation, and strength — education, in brief — as a little child.

The Bible abounds in passages which recognize this spiritual infancy of the new convert, and declare the need of fitting food and training for this childhood of faith. As "new-born babes" the converts are exhorted to desire "the sincere milk of the word." As children in the school of Christ, they are urged to diligence in learning that they may go on to perfection.

What the Scriptures thus assert, reason and experience confirm. It is quite plain that the soul ushered into a new field of experience — a new realm of ideas and activities — must enter upon it much as a child enters upon its earthly existence — feeble in knowledge and power, without steadiness of purpose or skill in action, with no settled rules of judgment, and unaided by the force of established habits. The change from evil to good — from selfishness to love — has merely begun in the heart. The new feelings and principles are merely bursting germs; or, to borrow Jesus' own beautiful thought, they are scions grafted in his great, rich, effluent nature. It is a career begun. There must be other changes — long ripening processes — ere full, fruit-bearing maturity can be reached.

Let this great fact of spiritual childhood be fully admitted. It is central,— the very core and key to all right thinking or wise acting in the training of young Christians. The Jesuits owed their rapid growth and astonishing sway in Europe to their fidelity to this principle of a spiritual education. They chose out children and trained them with an almost incredible patience till they had constructed a moral force which they could use with the precision and irresistable momentum of some massive machine. The infamous character of their maxims has blinded us to the admirable philosophy and efficiency of their plans. Just where the Jesuits won their success, the Protestant Christianity has failed. It has fatally neglected the training of its converts. If Jesuitism, with its utter mockery of principles, succeeded by dint of its efficient training of its young devotees, how much ought a Bible Christianity to do with equal training of its spiritual children? Every enlisted man in the Jesuit camp is a drilled soldier. The camp of our Protestant Christianity is often an undisciplined rabble of volunteers—warm-hearted, but weak, if not worthless, in the stern encounters of faith and unbelief.

I have urged thus at length the necessity of this training of young converts, because it is useless to indicate plans till men believe heartily in the ends to be attained. I venture now to suggest a

hints which others may ripen into guiding rules:

1. Christian training has two objects; first to ripen to maturity Christian character; second, to prepare for Christian work. The one seeks fully to save and sanctify the soul, the other to round out the measure of usefulness and work. The two objects are inseparable in fact, as full and powerful maturity in Christian growth must arise from, and result in, full and rounded activity in Christian work.

2. The education of a Christian soul to maturity must necessarily embrace every part and faculty of its being. True religion is the love of God with all the mind, all the soul or heart, and all the strength. It involves the Intellect, the Sensibilities, and the Will. All are converted or none. And all must be educated in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord."

3. Christian education includes, First, a clear comprehension of Christian truth; not, perhaps, a connected systematic theology, but the great central facts and truths, and clear and practiced judgment in reasoning from and applying them; Second, a warm and well-regulated development of Christian sensibility, including affections, conscience, and sentiments; Third, a Christian will, which is a will thoroughly submissive to God's will, however that will is shown, and this submissiveness crystalized into well-ordered and all embracing Christian habits.

The methods by which all this will be accomplished will be as various as the individual characters and circumstances of teachers and taught. Happily, the means of human education, secular or sacred, are not stinted. God has fitted the world to be our school-room as well as our home, and we may be sure that he has not left the provisions for man's spiritual training out of his account. And with the Bible added, that great text-book of all divine truth, Christian education, the education of God's children, is doubly provided for.

But some will ask us to be more explicit as to methods, and to such I offer the following hints:

1. As *Christian affections* lie at the foundation and front of Christian character, let the first aim be to train these affections. This is to be done, not by urging the young convert to love and faith, but by accustoming him to find in the Bible, and in Nature and Providence such facts and truths of the divine goodness and grace as will kindle in him feelings of gratitude and trust, and strengthen his new-born desire to obey and serve the good Lord and Saviour. Persist in this till this habit of mind and heart is fully formed, and the young Christian walks this earth as a child in his father's house, surrounded always by the tokens of his father's goodness and power.

2. Develop, also, but only in due measure, the facts of weakness and ill desert, the quick conscience against sin and all unholiness. It is hard to keep the balance true in the young Christian between love and trust on the one side and conscience and fear on the other. Let it be remembered that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," but that "love is the end of the law for righteousness," and that "perfect love casteth out fear."

3. In order to this training of the conscience and affections, there must be a culture of the intelligence. Let us not forget that religion is "heart-work," but let us also remember that the mills of the intellect grind the food for the affections. The love which is unnourished by thought dies like a flame without fuel. If we are to stand guarded against the "pride of intellect," so must we also against having the "understanding darkened." Not ignorance, but divine and Christian knowledge is the true "mother of devotion." The young convert, then, must be trained to think, to think deeply, earnestly, and habitually upon divine things, upon the great facts and truths of the Bible, and upon God's works in nature and history. The evil of the age

is that secular thinking is crowding out religious thinking. Happy the soul that never loses sight of the starry truths of Heaven, amid the dazzle or the dust of this earthly life. It is not merely the ability to answer the ordinary Sunday-school questions which should be sought, but to develop in the intelligence grand, broad, comprehensive ideas of the great God and his government, of Jesus the Christ and his infinite love and grace, of the soul, its grand capacities and destinies, and of the mighty interests of man for time and for eternity. Not once or twice should these ideas come to the mind, but they should abide there, and become fixed standards of measurement of the moral worth and real dignity of all other thoughts. They would then color all the views of life, and help to ennoble and purify the soul.

But all ideas and affections tend to dwindle and die out if they are not linked with action and consolidated into habits. So the convert must be set to work. Inaction will prove fatal to love, faith and power. Let them all, therefore, be kept in exercise. To exercise true Christian love there must be *self-denial for the sake of others*. Christian love is unselfish. It seeks purely the good of those to whom it is directed. The convert feels, and should put into action this love—in giving of his labor, his time, and his goods, as well as of his prayers and his counsels. He should form the *habit* of benevolence, of liberality, and of Christian work. Habit is the essential condition of steady, easy, and powerful action. We do easily and without pain or weariness work that we are wonted to.

5. Too much the training of converts has been to break off old habits and associations. They have been worn and fretted into impatience, if not into revolt, by constant injunctions "not to do" this and that, with only general commands to do good. True training is never negative. It is not restraint alone; it is direction to positive and specific work. All the impulses of the convert are active. He asks, what can I *do* for Christ and for my fellow-beings. Tell him, then, not merely what to avoid, but what to *do*. Give him scope and work. Train him for the most earnest, self-denying, God-honoring activity, and around this activity all the Christian graces will grow and bloom like plants by unfailing water brooks.

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON VI.—FEB. 7, 1875.—ACHAN'S SIN.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 7 : **19-26.** Commit **19-26**; Primary Verse **19.**

19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:

21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels' weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord.

24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan, the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire when they had stoned them with stones.

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Take heed and beware of covetousness."—LUKE 12: 15.

TOPIC.—"Be sure your sin will find you out."

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Gen.**	**25 : 27-34**	**.....The Sin of Esau.**
T.	**Gen.**	**37 : 2-36**	**.....The Sin of Joseph's Brethren.**
W.	**1 K.**	**21 : 1-19**	**.....The Sin of Ahab.**
Th.	**2 K.**	**5 : 20-27**	**.....The Sin of Gehazi.**
F.	**Acts**	**5 : 1-11**	**.....The Sin of Ananias and Sapphira.**
S.	**Matt.**	**26 : 14-25**	**.....The Sin of Judas.**
S.	**1 John**	**3 : 4-17**	**.....The Parentage of Sin.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Turn to 1 Chr. 2: 7 and see by what other name Achan was called. Now read Joshua 6: 18 and 7: 26 and see if you can find a reason for such a name. What three things made up Achan's sin? 11. This verse says "they" have taken, etc. Achan's sin was the sin of all the people until they removed it. What had he taken? 21. The garment was probably of fur ornamented. See Gen. 25: 25. The two hundred shekels were worth about $120. That would make the wedge (or "tongue") of gold worth how much? Why ought not Achan to have taken these? 6: 18.

2.—What were the effects of his taking it? 1–5, 11, 12. How many people were there in Ai? 8: 25. How many men did they send up against that place? 3. How many did the Israelites lose? 5. Ought the loss of thirty-six to have made them afraid? Was it that which did make them afraid? 12.

3.—Did Joshua believe that the men of Ai could have overcome if God had been fighting for the Israelites? 7. What did Joshua do? 6. Who with him? What did they rend their clothes and put dust on their heads for? Did they ever do that when they rejoiced? What was the prayer of Joshua? 7–9. What was the last and strongest appeal in the last part of the 9th verse? Is God anxious about the honor of his name? Can you dishonor it?

4.—What was God's reply? 10–15. Who does he show was at fault for this defeat? 11, 12. And this disaster and God's displeasure were brought about by what? 1. If the sin of one man could so trouble the whole host of Israel, do you think you can sin without hurting any one but yourself? If you put one apple with a rotten speck in it in a barrel of others what will happen? What sort, then, are you?

5.—How was Achan described? 16–18. "Was taken"—by lot. They cast lots, and God in this way pointed him out. First the tribe to which the guilty man belonged was pointed out, then his family, and, lastly, himself. How do you think he felt as he watched the progress of this trial, and saw that he was surely going to be found out? Can you hide sin from God? If through Christ you have not found pardon, can you bear to have him see you when the judgment day shall come? Rev. 6: 14–17.

6.—What was Achan's punishment? 24–26. Who did it include besides himself? 24. Do you think his sons and daughters would have been punished also unless they had aided him? As the things were hidden in his tent, do you think they must have known about it? What was the valley called after this? What does that mean?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CRIME. — The transgression of Achan was a violation of the command in Josh. 6: 18. The city and everything in it had been "devoted" to the Lord. What Achan took, therefore, was the Lord's property. He who took the Lord's property became the prototype of him who sold the Lord himself. The Babylonian garment was probably made of fur (Gen. 25: 25) richly embroidered, or it might have been one of the inwoven garments, for which the Babylonians were celebrated. The two hundred shekels of silver would amount to about $120; and the wedge or "tongue" of gold would be about $30. In the 11th verse God characterizes his guilt—stolen, dissembled, and hid it among his own stuff. One sin never goes alone. God charges all Israel with it, because his covenant is with all the people. The covenant, just renewed in circumcision and passover, was that they all should keep his commandments. One could as effectually break that as all, the same as the guns of a single ship can break a solemn treaty.

ITS EFFECTS.—*On the people.* 1. It took away their valor. Ai contained 12,000 people, men and women. Josh.

8:25. Of these, about 3,000 only would be fighting men. After the victory over Jericho this host seemed "but few" (v. 3) to the over-confident spies. Boastfully they said, "let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai, and let not all the men labor thither." Their reasoning is plain. If the walls of Jericho fell merely because of the blowing of trumpets this number will be more than is necessary in the reduction of Ai. By the passage through the water and the miraculous taking of Jericho they had come to believe that nothing could withstand them — that they bore charmed lives. So the loss of thirty-six men, though it was a mere handful, dispelled that illusion, and their hearts melted and became as water. The nations that they came to conquer had had their hearts melted because God was against them. The Israelites now experienced the same dissolving fear because they saw God was not with them. Their inference was just—when God is with us we are invincible: we are conquered; therefore he is not with us. And the deduction from that naturally would be that there is sin in the camp. For such panics they had been prepared by such utterances as are recorded in Lev. 26:14–17, 36; Deut. 28:15, 25, and by the actual experience of Israel spoken of in Deut. 1:42–44. 2. It com promised them all in the eyes of the Lord. His sin was the sin of the whole people.

On himself. — By taking "devoted" things he had himself become devoted. Deut. 7:26; 13:16, 17.

JOSHUA'S PRAYER.—Joshua and the elders prostrate themselves before the ark, seeking in humility to know the reason of this disgrace. They rend their clothes and put dust upon their heads in token of their mourning. For the different emotions of which these acts were the expression, see Gen. 37:29, 34; Num. 14:6; 1 Sam. 4:12; 2 Sam. 1:2; 3:31; Ez. 9:3; Neh. 9:1; Job 2:12; Lam. 2:10; Matt. 26:65; Acts 14:14. The argument in the prayer runs: Israel fled—danger from the Canaanite—what wilt thou do to save thy great name from dishonor? The climax is in the last, the others being mentioned principally to show wherein the Lord's name is in danger of being dishonored. Taking this as the key his lamentation (7) seems not to be a selfish repining and discontent, but a laying of things in order before the Lord that the last appeal might have its full effect. So Moses prayed—not in murmuring, but in faith. Ex. 5:22; 32:12, 32; Num. 14:13–19. How effective such supplications were can be gathered from the contexts in each case, and from Deut. 32:26, 27. See, also, Ezek. 36:21–23.

THE REPLY—Is direct, evidently. It comes through no high-priest. It is a rebuke, the tenor of which is: "You, the servant of the Lord, might have known that I was not to blame—it is Israel that hath sinned. Instead of lying there upon your face, you should be instituting an inquiry as to who hath committed iniquity." Still, God is gracious even in his rebuking, making all allowance for his servant's slow comprehension, even as he, with us all, shows that he knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. He not only says that there is guilt, but tells what it is and how it is to be found out and punished.

THE EXPOSURE. — 1. They were to sanctify themselves. Each one was to scrutinize himself to see if in anything he had offended. That was Achan's last opportunity. By still concealing his crime he added hypocrisy to his other sins. Confession then might, perhaps, have saved him. 2. The trial was to be by lot, — the popular estimation of which was spoken of in Prov. 16:33; 18:18. Some of the occasions and modes of its practice are given in Lev. 16:8, 10: Num. 26:55; Josh. 18:10; Judg. 1:1–3; 20:9, 10; Ezek. 21:21; Hos. Hos. 4:12; Joel 3:3; Nah. 3:10; Obad. 11; Matt. 27:35; Acts 13:19. 3. The order of the trial. 1st. All Israel in the persons of the heads of the tribes, in order to point out the tribe. 2d. All the

heads of the families in that tribe, in order to indicate the family; 3d. All the men in that family, in order to select the culprit. How terrible to Achan must have been each successive step as it came nearer and nearer to him! The circle keeps narrowing, closing him in all around, until finally the guilty one is declared to be in his own family, and then it remains only to point out the man. In the midst of his agony he still desperately hopes that at the last, by some chance, some other one will draw the fatal stone. He has already drawn upon all Israel the displeasure of the Lord, has caused their defeat before Ai, and now hopes to make another bear the punishment of his crime. But God guides the hands that are put into the bag, and finally he stands before his fellows a convicted, despairing, but unrepentant thief! What were two hundred shekels of silver, fifty shekels of gold and a Babylonian garment, however "goodly," worth to him then? Of what avail had been his dissimulation, (acting as if he had them not,) his hiding, his hypocrisy?

THE CONFESSION.—It came, but it came too late. If he had acknowledged his sin before, we are at liberty to infer how that would have aided him from Job 33:27, 28; Ps. 32:3, 5; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9. Then, indeed, it would have been a confession—now it was simply an admission of judgment.

THE PUNISHMENT.—The penalty included more than himself—"his sons and his daughters," etc. Some think that they were taken into the valley only to behold the terrible punishment of iniquity. But the oxen and the cattle were not taken there for such a purpose, and, although the narrative says that "all Israel stoned *him* with stones" yet it also says, "and burned *them* with fire after they had stoned *them* with stones." By Deut. 24:16, it will be seen that no child could be put to death for the sin of his father. There is, therefore, reason to suppose from this, and from the nature of the case, that his children were participants in his crime. He could hardly have dug the hole under his tent and hid the things without their knowledge, and, probably, their aid. They dissimulated with him, went with him through the mockery of sanctification, and, to the last, by their silence denied the crime. Their fate was as well deserved as his.

Personal.

1. Achan coveted and fell. Alas for the power of sumptuous garments and glittering shekels! They bait the most seductive of the devil's traps to-day. Hab. 2:9; 1 Cor. 6:10; Col. 3:5; Mark 7:20–23.

2.—Sin is a "trouble" and a curse. Ps. 38:3; Prov. 28:1; Eccl. 2:26; Is. 57:20, 21; 59:8; 1 Cor. 15:56.

3.—"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Ps. 44:21; Prov. 15:3; Job 34:21; Jer. 32:19; Heb. 4:13.

4.—If one sin all suffer. 1 Cor. 12:26; 1 Pet. 4:15; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8:9–13; 2 Cor. 11:29; Heb. 12:15; Jas. 3:2.

5.—God is our refuge in time of trouble. Ps. 9:9; 34:6; 46:1; 107:6; 2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

6.—We should be diligent in the care of our hearts. A new sanctification should closely follow the first discovered sin. 2 Chr. 15:2; 34:27; Prov. 4:23; Jer. 4:14; Is. 1:16; Eph. 4:25, 26; 1 Pet. 3:10–12; 2 Pet. 3:14.

7.—How foolish for the sinner to hope to escape detection. Ps. 10:11; 64:5–7; 139:7–13; Is. 3:9; 29:15; 30:1.

8.—The church should not tolerate within itself the workers of iniquity. Matt. 18:15–17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:11–13; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14.

9.—Confession and repentance may come too late. Job. 27:8,9; Prov. 1:24–28; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; Ezek. 8:18; Matt. 25:13; Heb. 12:16, 17.

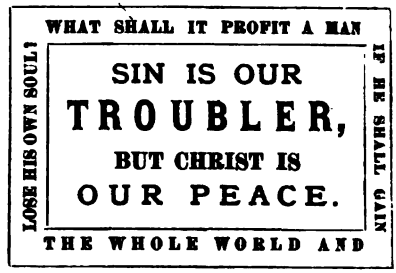
10.—"The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:21,23; 5:21; 7:5; 8:6; Jas. 1:5.

HYMN.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

By him my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled.
Satan accuses me in vain
For I am owned a child.

BLACKBOARD.



THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Describe a great city with thick walls around it; a place so strong that people well might say, "This city can never be taken." Inside the city there is a great deal of wealth—much gold, silver, and many rich and beautiful garments, etc. The name of the place—Jericho. There were a great many places like this in the land which God had promised to the Israelites, and he said that they should have them all except the first one. Everything in that was to be his. All the rest was to belong to the Israelites. As God was going to give them so much, would not he be very wicked who would try to steal anything when this first city was taken?

2. Tell again about the way the city was captured, and how all the Israelites were engaged in destroying the wicked people who dwelt in it and the things they possessed. All but one. A man by the name of Achan saw a beautiful Babylonian garment, and some silver money, and a gold wedge, and when no one saw him, took them to his tent and dug a hole under it and hid them.

3.—No man saw him, but he did not think of God. The Lord saw him, and would not fight for the Israelites any more. They tried to take Ai, another city, but the men in that city made them run, and slew thirty-six of their men. Then the hearts of all the people melted for fear, and became as water. It is God that makes us conquerors.

4.—Joshua didn't know what was the reason why the people were defeated. He felt very bad about it. There wasn't any man who could tell him. To whom then could he go? Did God know? Well, he went to God (read his prayer), and the Lord told him what was the matter, and how he could discover the thief.

5.—Tell the process of his detection—describe Achan's anxiety and remorse—then his punishment and death. Was it worth while to risk so much for so little? Is it worth while to do anything wrong when we put in peril our own souls?

HYMN.

I will not walk in sin's broad way
Whatever Satan saith,
For tho' the way seems fair and good,
It leadeth unto Death.

BLACKBOARD.

THE WAGES OF SIN IS
DEATH.

LESSON VII.—FEB. 14, 1875.—EBAL AND GERIZIM.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 8: 30-35. Commit 32-35; Primary Verse, 32.

30 Then Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal,

31 As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lifted up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings.

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

33 And all Israel, and their elders and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing."—DEUT. 30: 19.

TOPIC.—THE GREAT CHOICE.

HOME READINGS.

M. Deut. 27: 1-10.....The Building Commanded.
T. Deut. 28: 1-14.....The Blessings Promised.
W. Deut. 27: 11-26; 28: 15-68..The Cursings Threatened.
Th. 2 Chr. 9: 1-28.....The Blessings Fulfilled.
F. Lam. 1: 1-22.....The Cursings Realized.
S. Matt. 25: 31-45....."Come ye Blessed."
S. Matt. 25: 41-46....."Depart ye Cursed."

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—It is absolutely necessary that you should faithfully follow up the Home Readings in order thoroughly to master this lesson. We are sure that those who do it will feel themselves amply rewarded. Besides these we will try to aid you with our questions all that we can. It takes some little time and patience in thumbing over the Bible to get at the answers, but there is a joy in learning which you have realized before this if you have hunted them out. You are learning lessons for a longer life than this, and our heart is full of a desire to be a real help to you. We ask no questions just for the sake of asking them, or to puzzle you. We want to be your Question Friend!

2.—The first part of this chapter tells how the Israelites took the city of Ai. They did not get it by fighting. Perhaps you can tell how they did take it? Where did Joshua build an altar? 30. Why did he do this? Deut. 27: 4, 5. Of what sort of stones was the altar to be made? Deut. 27: 5. Was there any iron tool to be used in making it? Was it so made? 31. Of what were altars always to be made? Ex. 20: 24. In that and the next verse to that you can find why no iron was permitted to be used on the stone in this altar.

3.—What was the altar used for after it was built? 31. The burnt offering denoted that the people of Israel offered themselves to God, and promised to be obedient to his will. The peace offering was a feast-communion with God—part of the sacrifice being burnt upon the altar (that was God's part), part being eaten by the priests, and part by those who offered it.

4.—Did Joshua build anything besides the altar? Deut. 27: 2. What was to be written on these stones? Deut. 27: 3; verse 32. Ask your teacher what "all the words of this law" refers to.

5.—What did Joshua read or have read? 34. What are the blessings? Deut. 28: 1-14. What are the cursings? Deut. 27: 15-26; 28: 15-68. Where were the blessings pronounced, and by whom? Deut. 27: 12. Where were the cursings, and who uttered them? Deut. 27: 13. How many on each mountain? If you will look on a map of Palestine you will find Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim nearly in the middle of the map. Shechem, where Joseph was buried, and where was Jacob's well, is right between them. To whom was all the law read? 35. Did the Israelites ever receive these blessings? Did they ever receive these cursings? (See Home Readings.) When were they blessed? Deut. 28: 2. When cursed? Deut. 28: 15. When are you happy? When unhappy?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE ALTAR.— The erection of the altar was in obedience to the command first intimated in Deut. 11: 29, but made specific in Deut. 27: 5, 6. It was commanded to be built of "whole stones," upon which no "iron" had been lifted up. This was in accordance with the general direction given in Ex. 20: 24, 25, where God enjoins that his people shall build him an altar of earth, but gives permission to erect altars of stone on condition that they shall not be of hewn stone. His altar was not to be a man's altar. He wanted to invest it with peculiar sanctity, and therefore he only was to furnish the material. So early was his great purpose of exclusive salvation manifest. He insisted upon providing the altar, even as in later times he himself provided the sacrifice, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

THE SACRIFICE—Was of burnt offerings and peace offerings. The former, it will be remembered, were to signify that as the sacrifice was consumed entirely away, so they gave themselves wholly and unreservedly to the Lord. The peace offerings were in the nature of a communion feast — the portion burned was the share that God had in it, the portion given to the priests still further recognized his presence in the person of his ministers, and, lastly, the circle was made complete in the persons of the offerers of the sacrifice who ate with joy what remained. Standing as they did in the near presence of blessings and cursings it will be seen how necessary it was that they should flee from the shadow of divine anger into the kingdom of peace — that they should lay up for themselves an inheritance of blessing instead of a legacy of wrath. How much their future depended on that moment!

THE LAW.—From an examination of Deut. 27: 2–4, 8, it will be seen that the law was to be written, not on the altar, but on a "heap of stones," whitewashed with lime. What is meant by "all the words of this law" is uncertain. There are advocates of the literal wording of the phrase; others who think it refers to the decalogue; others, still, to all that, and that only, in the Pentateuch which could really be considered law, and others who connect it with the blessings and cursings simply, they being in themselves an epitome of the law. For ourselves, we incline to the latter view, the connection, the circumstances, together with the phraseology of Deut. 11: 29 and Josh. 8: 34, helping toward such a conclusion.

EBAL AND GERIZIM.— These two mountains form the sides of the fertile valley in which was Shechem, near to which was Jacob's well, and in which were deposited the bones of Joseph. The two mountains are not more than five hundred yards apart. Ebal is on the north, and Gerizim on the south. One of the most serious variations between the Hebrew and Samaritan texts of the Pentateuch occurs in relation to Deut. 27: 4, where the latter has "Gerizim" instead of Ebal. By their version Samaritans claim that the altar was erected on Gerizim — the mount of blessing — and that, therefore, was the proper place for the holy city and temple. Hence the bitter dissension between them and the Jews, and hence, too, the reason of the question asked of Christ by the Samaritan woman. John 4: 20. And Gerizim is still the Jerusalem of the modern Samaritan who clings to this rag of superstition instead of profiting by Christ's answer. It was at Shechem that Joshua assembled the people to give them his last benediction, and where he erected the stone that was to be a witness under the oak by the sanctuary. 24: 1, 25–27. As might be expected there are fables of the fertility of Gerizim caused by the blessings pronounced upon it and the barrenness of Ebal on account of the curses there uttered.

THE BLESSINGS.— These are given in Deut. 28: 1–14. It is instructive to

compare them with those set forth in Lev. 26: 3–13 and in Deut. 30: 1–16. It is interesting to trace how literally these promises were redeemed whenever Israel kept her covenant. For a few instances out of many compare: Deut. 28: 10 with 1 Chr. 14: 17; Deut. 28: 12 with Joel 2: 23; Lev. 26: 6 with Ps. 147: 14; Lev. 26: 9 with Neh. 9: 23; Deut. 28: 7 with Josh. 8: 22; Deut. 28: 5 with 2 Chr. 9: 22; 31: 10; 32: 27–29.

THE CURSINGS.— It will be noticed that when the blessings were read the people kept silence. There was no need for them to say anything. Their willingness to receive *them* was unquestioned. But as each curse was pronounced all the people said "Amen." Deut. 27: 15–26. By this they recognized the justice of each fearful anathema. When, in after time, the Israelites went astray and brought upon themselves the terrors here announced, they passed not only under the condemnation of God, but of that ancestral host that here gave their assent to the righteousness of their doom. So, in a more fearful way, their descendants called upon their own heads and the heads of their children, the terrible retribution of the blood that was shed on Calvary. For cursings similar to those here uttered see Lev. 26: 14–39; Deut. 29: 18–28. For their literal fulfillments compare Lev. 26: 22 with Lam. 1: 4; Lev. 26: 26 with Hag. 1: 6; Lev. 26: 31 with 2 Chr. 36: 19; Neh. 2: 3; Lev. 26: 39 with Lam. 4: 9; Deut. 28: 22 with Amos 4: 9, 10; Deut. 28: 23 with Jer. 14: 1–6; Deut. 28: 29 with Isa. 59: 10; Deut. 28: 32 with 2 Chr. 29: 9; Deut. 28: 33 with Neh. 9: 36, 37; Deut. 28: 35 with Isa. 1: 6; Deut. 28: 36 with 2 Chr. 36: 5, 6; Deut. 28: 38 with Hag. 1: 6 and Joel 1: 4; Deut. 28: 41 with 2 K. 24: 14 and Lam. 1: 5; Lev. 26: 29 and Deut. 28: 53 with 2 K. 6: 28, 29 and Lam. 2: 20; 4: 10.

THE READING.—The priests stood in the valley surrounding the ark. They read the law. Deut. 27: 14. Joshua is spoken of in one chapter as having read it because he commanded it to be done. The Scriptures often speak of one as having done the thing which he caused to be done. On Gerizim were Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. On Ebal were Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali. Deut. 27: 12, 13. Besides these were "the women and the little ones and the strangers," that were gathered to hear this impressive reading of the law. God never forgot those who by mankind are so often overlooked — the strangers and the little ones. See Deut. 31: 12; 6: 6–9. He meant that they should be thoroughly instructed in his law.

Home Truths.

1.— Salvation is not of man — man only provided the cross. Ps. 3: 8; 68: 20; Is. 52: 10; Jer. 3: 23; Zech. 9: 9; Acts 4: 12; Eph. 2: 8, 9; 1 Cor. 1: 29; Heb. 5: 9.

2.— God's judgments are not a surprise — no one can plead: "I did not know." Is. 40:21; Mark 13: 23; Luke 12: 5; John 14: 29; 18: 20, 21; Acts 3: 24; Rom. 16: 25, 26.

3.—Be it blessing or cursing, it is our choice. He sets before us life and death, but urges us to choose life. Deut. 30: 19; Lam. 3: 33; Ezek. 18: 23, 32; Hos. 11: 8; Matt. 23: 37; 1 Thess. 4: 7; 1 Tim. 2: 4; 2 Pet. 3: 9.

4.—One or the other we *must* choose. Josh. 24: 15; 1 K. 18: 21; Matt. 6: 24; 2 Cor. 6: 2; Rev. 3: 15, 16.

5.— Consider our happier lot. We have an imperishable Bible in which are written all the things that pertain to life instead of gathering our law from plastered stones. Is. 35: 8; John 20: 31; Rom 15: 4; 1 Cor. 9: 10; 10: 11.

6.—Sooner or later each soul will ratify the justice of its own doom. Job. 15: 6; Jer. 2: 26; Matt. 12: 37; 22: 12; Luke 19: 22; Rom. 3: 19; 14: 12; Tit. 3: 10, 11; Heb. 10: 26, 27; Jude 15; Rev. 15: 4; 20: 12.

HYMN.

Ye sinners seek His grace
Whose wrath ye can not bear;
Fly to the shelter of his cross
And find salvation there.

So shall the curse remove
For which the Saviour bled,
And that last awful day shall find
His blessings on your head.

BLACKBOARD.

"I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU
LIFE and DEATH,
BLESSING & CURSING,
THEREFORE Choose LIFE."
—*Deut.* 30: 19.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Photograph the great gathering between the two mountains as vividly as you can—priests in the valley with the ark—half the people on Mt. Gerizim and half on Mt. Ebal—the women and the strangers and the little ones. It was a great day. Something wonderful and solemn was to be done.

2.—On Mt. Ebal Joshua had built an altar out of unhewn stone. (Draw a rough one on the blackboard.) No iron tool had been used on it because it was to be God's altar, and not man's. Beside this, Joshua had built a great heap of stones, so that they stood up like a wall, and had whitewashed them. Now what was this altar and what was this pile of stones for?

3.—If a little boy should do anything wrong without knowing it, ought he to be punished? When little babies pull dishes off the table and break them, we don't punish them, because they don't know any better. So God, who loves us more than our parents, was very careful not to punish the Israelites unless they did something wrong which he had plainly forbidden. So he had Moses often read to them the words of the law, that they might understand it. And he commanded the people of Israel, just as soon as they came into the promised land to erect this altar and build up these stones. (Read Deut. 27: 2–6.) Now let us see what was to be done on the altar. (Get a little girl to read Deut. 27: 6, 7.) What was to be done on the stones? (Get a little boy to read Deut. 27: 18.) "All the words of this law" were to be written on the stones so that the people could see and obey them. (Holding up a Bible) Are God's words written on stones now? What are they written in? Which is best?

4.—Not only were the words of the law told them, but God commanded that the people should be told in a loud voice what blessings he would give them, and what great things he would do for them if they obeyed it. (Read and make plain some of the blessings mentioned in Deut. 28: 1–14.) And then they were told what terrible things would happen to them if they disobeyed. (Read, etc., in Deut. 27: 15–26; 28: 15–68.)

5.—Just so has God in this book of his told you what to do—that you must not do evil—that you must be sorry for all the evil you have done, and ask him, for Christ's sake, to forgive your sins. If you will do so, he promises you great blessings—happiness here, home, friends, and, above all, that he will be your friend and give you a beautiful home in heaven. If you will not obey him there will be no peace for you even here—some of you will find your way into jails and penitentiaries, and last, and saddest of all, into the place prepared for the devil and his angels. God desires you to come to him—urges you to come. Will you not do it to-day?

HYMN.

To-day the Saviour calls—
For refuge fly.
The storm of justice falls
And death is nigh.

The spirit calls to-day—
Yield to his power.
Oh grieve him not away,
'Tis mercy's hour.

BLACKBOARD.

GOOD OR EVIL,

CHRIST OR SATAN

WHICH?

LESSON VIII.—FEB. 21, 1875.—CALEB'S INHERITANCE.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 14: 6-15. Commit 6-12; Primary Verse, 8.

6 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the Son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the Lord my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.

10 And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day four score and five years old.

11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.

13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.

14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day; because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.

15 And the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any man serve me him will my Father honor."—JOHN 12: 26.

TOPIC.—GOD THE REWARDER.

HOME READINGS.

M. Num. 13: 1-33.....Caleb's Service.
T. Num. 14: 1-10.....Caleb's Faithfulness.
W. Gen. 15: 8-18.....Abraham's Promised Inheritance.
Th. Gen. 28: 10-22.....Jacob's Promised Inheritance.
F. Gen. 41: 39-52.....Joseph's Reward for Fidelity.
S. 1 K. 3: 5-14.....Solomon's Reward for Unselfishness.
S. Rev. 21: 7-27.....Our Promised Inheritance.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Whose son was Caleb? Num. 13: 6. What tribe did he belong to? What family? 6, 14. Did he hold any office in his tribe? Num. 13: 2. See what else he is called in Num. 34: 18, 19. How old was he when he went into Canaan as a spy? 7. Now look at verse 10 and see if you can tell how old he was at the time our lesson speaks of him. When people get to that age how do they usually appear? Did Caleb appear like an old man? 11.

2.—Caleb was one of the spies sent to find out about the land of Palestine. God's command to go is given in Num. 13: 1, 2. The men Moses selected are mentioned in the same chapter, verses 3-16. What they were to do is told in verses 17-20. What they did in 21-25. Their report is given in 26-33. Did Caleb's report differ from theirs? Num. 13: 30; 14: 7, 8. How? Which one agreed with Caleb? Num. 14: 6.

What were the Israelites going to do with Joshua and Caleb? What saved them? Num. 14: 9, 10.

3.—What did Caleb want of Joshua? 9, 12. How did he prove his right to "this mountain"? 9, 12. What mountain was it? 13. When had God promised it to him? Num. 14: 24; Deut. 1: 36. What did he promise to him at the same time? Num. 14: 30, 38; 32: 11, 12. Were all the rest destroyed, and only Joshua and Caleb saved alive? Num. 26: 64, 65. Why was it that God saved these two only, and promised this mountain to Caleb? From which of the references given can you find out? See also verse 14.

4.—Did he get what he asked for? Do you think he felt sure he would? Why? Because he had served the Lord, or because the Lord had promised it to him? Has God promised us an inheritance? 1 Cor. 2: 9. What is the condition of our inheritance? Have you such faith to claim it as Caleb had?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

CALEB.—"Son of Jephunneh." Num. 13: 6. A Kenezite, or "Son of Kenaz." Num. 32: 12. A ruler of the tribe of Judah (Num. 13: 2), and a prince or patriarch of that tribe. Num. 34: 19. In verse 7 he says he was forty years old when he went to spy out the land, and in verse 10 that he was eighty-five at the time referred to in our lesson. As the land was now all conquered, from his mention of the lapsing of forty-five years since the time of the rebellion at Kadesh-barnea is deduced the time spent in the reduction of Canaan, by subtracting therefrom the remaining thirty-eight years of wanderings. This leaves seven years as devoted to that object.

Caleb's history is beautiful. That of Joshua is intertwined with it where it is spoken of in the Scriptures, but, while Joshua obtained the higher position as ruler, yet, where the two come together, Caleb is mentioned as if he were foremost, and, sometimes, alone in his noble fidelity. In Num. 13: 30 it is Caleb that stills the murmuring people. In Num. 14: 24 he alone receives the divine commendation. So in Deut. 1: 36 Moses speaks of him before his mention of Joshua in the 38th verse. Only in Num. 14: 6, 38 does the name of Joshua precede that of Caleb, and in those two instances, their two names are immediately connected only with the fact of their being among the spies, and not with their heroic service. So it is not surprising that Caleb's inheritance should be given first, before any of the tribes received theirs, and that Joshua's should be given subsequently, "when they had made an end of dividing the land." Josh. 19: 49.

What was Caleb's life after he came into possession of Hebron is not known. The Scriptures are silent upon it. It is natural, however, to infer that he cultivated the land given him — that he attained an old age peculiarly vigorous and divinely supported—that he enjoyed the friendship and special confidence of Joshua, his brother in trial,—and that he died full of honors as of years, having the respect of all who knew him.

HIS SERVICE.—Just when it was most needed, and when it took courage and faith to be loyal. God had given his command that spies should be sent into Palestine. Num. 13: 1, 2. The men selected (Num. 13: 3–16) had performed the duty (21–25) as required (17–20). They had made a false report (25–33). That report had been adopted. To speak truth then was like shouting against a gale. Caleb "stilled the people" (Num. 13: 30) while he gave his manly testimony against the cowardly representation that they were not able to go up against the people of that land. It was one truth-teller against ten liars — one man against over two-millions. That meant moral heroism. And again, when the spies began to spread evil reports about the land, then again was his fidelity unflinching. Caleb and Joshua both testified as to the exceeding value of the land they had searched. If honesty had not been that day at a discount, the people would have remembered that the other spies themselves said that "the land whither thou sentest us surely

floweth with milk and honey" (Num. 13: 27), and the cluster of grapes from the brook Eshcol, and the pomegranates and the figs (23) all supported the words of these two brave men, and branded the others as false. But they were seized with fury. They were bent upon deposing Moses and returning into Egypt. This host had been told of giants, sons of Anak, and now, blinded with rage, Joshua and Caleb remind them of G O D — whom they had forgotten — mightier than giants. The first encounter took moral courage, but this last an uncalculating devotion that made no measure of danger. And their destruction was imminent, for the congregation took up stones to stone them. Num. 14: 10. But God, for whom they had periled their lives, now interferes in *their* behalf. They had testified for the glory of the Lord, and now the glory of the Lord is their protection.

His Promised Rewards.—1st. That he should live to see Canaan; 2d, that he should have a possession in it. Each actor in that day's rebellion had his reward. The false spies died "by the plague before the Lord." Num. 14: 36, 37. All the people were condemned by reason of it to perish in the wilderness. Num. 14: 26–35. Only Joshua and Caleb were to be saved alive. Num. 14: 30. The wording of the 9th verse of our lesson seems more especially to refer back to Deut. 1: 36, and that in its turn rests upon Num. 14: 24. There must have been some specific reference to Hebron in this promise, as the land "trodden upon" by Caleb, which does not appear on record, except as it comes out in Caleb's speech in verse 12. Of this specific reference Joshua seems to have had knowledge, for Caleb's petition appears based on his intimate acquaintance with it. There must have been some limitation of this kind, for the spies went "from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob as men come to Hamath,"—from the southern nearly to the northern border of Palestine.

His Demand.—He shows his faith in God even in making his claim. The Lord, by his servant Moses, had promised, and should he not fulfill? He mentions the fact that God had kept him alive as he had said, and that, now, at eighty-five, he was as strong for war as when Moses sent him — he mentions these to show how thoroughly he believes that having done so much, God will not fail in the performance of the rest of his promise. With him it was: The Lord hath said; the Lord hath done; the Lord will do. Here was forty-five years of patient waiting. No hint of uneasiness or of doubt during all that time. Having "wholly followed" God, he wholly trusted him. But he does not wait for the Lord to do it all. There is a time for him to speak and make his claim — to present his promise and get it cashed. Christ died that all might be saved, but his death will avail no one who does not present the blood certificate. No bank runs after its promises to pay. If they are worth anything, they are worth presentation.

The Fulfillment.— His faith was not in vain. Joshua recognized the authority of his claim, and blessed him and gave Hebron unto him as an inheritance. It will be noticed that faith on his part was still required, for the Anakim still infested his possessions. They had been once conquered, and those who were beaten were utterly destroyed. Josh. 11: 21, 22. But the rest had returned to their old abiding places while the Israelites were elsewhere engaged, and chap. 15: 13–19 and Judg. 1: 9–20 tell of his expulsion of this remnant.

Hebron—Is midway between Jerusalem and Beersheba, about twenty-five miles from each. It was a very ancient city; was known to Abraham (Gen. 13: 18), and was built "seven years before Zoan in Egypt." Num. 13: 22. Verse 15 of our lesson gives the original name of the place as Kirjath-arba, from Arba, the father of the giant Anakim. Caleb retained only "the fields of the city and the villages thereof," the city itself being given to the Kohathites, "the children

of Levi," and, therefore, priests. 21: 10–12. It was selected at the same time, as a city of refuge. 21: 13. Sarah died in Hebron, and here it was that Abraham bargained with Ephron, the Hittite, for the field and cave of Machpelah as a burial place for his dead. Gen. 23: 2–20. Here Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spent a good share of their lives, and it was from hence that Jacob departed into Egypt by the way of Beersheba. Gen. 46: 1. While David was merely king of Judah, Hebron was his capital. Its modern name is *el-Kulill*, meaning "The Friend," probably from the designation given to Abraham as "The Friend of God." A massive mosque stands over the patriarchal sepulchre which is jealously guarded by the Moslems. There seems to be a poetical fitness that to Caleb, who had so conspicuously proved his fidelity, should be given the land purchased by Abraham, and made specially sacred in the eyes of all Israel as the dwelling-place of the patriarchs.

Crumbs of Comfort.

1.—He who pleads God's promise has a sure thing. Deut. 7: 9; 2 Sam. 23: 1–5; Is. 55: 3; Matt. 7: 24, 25; Acts 13: 23; Rom. 9: 33; Heb. 7: 20–22; 10: 23.

2.—"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6: 25–34; Ps. 23: 1; 34: 10; 37: 9, 11; 55: 22; 84: 11; Is. 33: 15, 16; Rom. 8: 32; 9: 33; Phil. 4: 6; 1 Tim. 4: 8.

3.—Who honors God will himself be honored. 1 Sam. 2: 30; Ps. 15: 4; 75: 10; 91: 4; Prov. 3: 9, 10; 22: 4; 27: 18; Is. 52: 13; John 12: 26; Rom, 2: 10; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12.

4.—No man shall fail of his reward. Prov. 11: 18; Matt. 10: 42; John 6: 39; Rom. 14: 12; Gal. 6: 9; Col. 3: 23, 24; 2 Tim. 2: 19; Rev. 21: 27.

5.—But who shall tell of the glory of the inheritance which the Lord hath promised to those who love him! Matt. 25: 34; John 14: 2; 1 Cor. 2: 9; Col. 1: 12; Heb. 1: 4; 11: 14–16; 1 Pet. 1: 4; Rev. 21: 7.

6.—Whoever takes anything as from the hand of the Lord gets a blessing with it. Ex. 23: 25; Deut. 7: 13; 28: 8; Ps. 35: 27; 94; 12; Matt. 5: 10–12; Rom. 8: 18; 2 Cor. 4: 8, 9; Jas. 1: 12; 1 Pet. 4: 13, 14.

7.—Length of days is given to the upright. Deut. 4: 40; 30: 20; Ps. 91: 16; 92: 14; 55: 23; Prov. 3: 2; 9: 11; 10: 27; Is. 46: 4.

HYMN.

How rich thy favors, God of grace!
  How various and divine!
Full as the ocean are they poured,
  And bright as heaven they shine.

The songs of everlasting years
  That mercy shall attend [hour,
That leads, through sufferings of an
  To joys that never end.

BLACKBOARD.

A MOMENT of Peril

for God;

AN

EVERLASTING INHERITANCE

from Him.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The story of the spies: Their journey into Canaan; the beautiful country they saw (draw map of Palestine and show where they went, from the wilderness of Zin to the northern border), the pomegranates, the figs, the luscious grapes they gathered at Eschol—just such a country as the Israelites would like to live in—a land "flowing with milk and honey. But they saw, besides, cities with walls around them very difficult to conquer, and men of great stature, "giants," which made them feel in their own sight as if they were grasshoppers. Fear always magnifies its object. Perhaps some little

boy on some dark night has found that out.

2.—Caleb's heroism. The spies come back. Ten of them reported country good—but those giants!—we can't ever conquer the country. Then the people murmured and wailed greatly. They were afraid too. But there was One with them who could overcome even giants—in whose sight even giants were as grasshoppers. He had brought them through the Red Sea, and had overcome all their enemies for them. Who was he? It was God they forgot. Well, there was one who did not forget him—yes, two—Caleb and Joshua; Caleb stilled the multitude, and told them that they were well able to conquer the land. But it did no good. The spies began then to spread false reports about the land, until at last the people got so angry with God and with Moses for bringing them hither that they were going to choose another leader and go back to Egypt. They were afraid of giants, but they were not afraid to rebel against God. Then Caleb and Joshua rent their clothes and braved this furious people, saying that they could conquer the land if God only would help them, and urged them not to rebel against him. But how angry the people were. They took up stones to kill those two brave men, and would have done so only that the glory of the Lord appeared and protected them. God would not let those suffer who had acted so nobly.

3.—All the people that acted so wickedly were never permitted by God to see this beautiful land. They all died in the desert. The ten false spies died of a plague before the Lord. But God preserved the lives of Joshua and of Caleb, and brought them into the land and gave Caleb a possession in it. That possession was called Mount Hebron, and it is right here (show on the map, and then tell about it). God promised to preserve the lives of Caleb and of Joshua because they "wholly followed him." Tell how God kept Caleb, and read what Caleb says about it.

HYMN.

What can little hands do
For the Lord above?
Little hands can kindly do
Little deeds of love.

What can little eyes do?
They ought not to shirk.
Little eyes can help the hands
Find their blessed work.

What can little feet do
In this ministry!
They can run so happily
"Wholly following Thee."

BLACKBOARD.

Sacred to the Memory
—OF—
CALEB
SON OF
JEPHUNNEH.
—++—
He
WHOLLY FOLLOWED
THE LORD.

LESSON IX.—FEB. 28, 1875.—THE LAND DIVIDED.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 18 : 1-10. Commit 1-10; Primary Verse, 8.

1 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there: and the land was subdued before them.

2 And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the

land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you.

4 Give out from among you three men for each tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come again to me.

5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

6 Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the description hither to me that I may cast lost for you here before the Lord our God.

7 But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave them.

8 And the men arose and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh.

9 And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh.

10 And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the Lord: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."—Ps. 16: 6.

TOPIC.—GOD'S PROMISE SURE.

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. 12: 1-8; 13: 14-17..The Promise to Abraham.
T. Gen. 15: 1-21.....The Prophecy and Promise.
W. Gen. 28: 10-22.....The Promise Renewed to Jacob.
Th. Gen. 48: 1-22.....Jacob's Faith in the Promise.
Th. Gen. 49: 22-26.....Joseph's Faith in the Promise.
F. Ex 3: 1-22.....The Beginning of the Fulfillment.
S. Ex. 14: 5-31.....The Prophecy in part Fulfilled.
S. Josh. 18 and 19.....Prophecy and Promise Wholly Redeemed.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—"Shiloh" is about sixteen to eighteen miles north of Jerusalem. What was "the tabernacle of the congregation" which the Israelites set up there? Judg. 18: 31; 1 Sam. 1: 24. What was in it? 1 Sam. 4: 3, 4. Who selected Shiloh as the place where it was to be set up? Deut. 12: 10, 11. Did the tabernacle always remain there? Ps. 78: 60. Read verses 54-69 of that psalm and see if you can tell why God forsook Shiloh, and where the house of God was next erected.

2.—How many tribes were there of the Israelites? Ex. 28: 21. The land now was all conquered except a very little, and the next step was to divide their new possessions. A part had already been divided. It was all that east of the Jordan. That was conquered first. Now look at Num. 32: 33 and see to whom that had been given. Read Num. 32: 1-5 and find the reason why this land was given them. Verses 7-15 of the same chapter will give you Moses' objections to their having it. Verses 17-19 give their answer to his objections. Verses 20-32 give the argument by which they were permitted to inherit that land. Besides these some of the tribes had had their homes given them on the west side of the river. What tribes were they? 15: 1; 16: 1. "The children of Joseph" were really two tribes. Give their names. 16: 4.

3.—Gad, Reuben, Manasseh, Judah, and Ephraim had received their portions. How many tribes had yet to have their shares given them? Were they eager to get what belonged to them? 3. They had been roaming about so long that they found it hard work to settle down and *work*. We guess you know how that is. How many men were chosen from each tribe to survey the land? 4. How many in all would that be? (3 times 7 — *not* 3 times 12.) After it was surveyed how was the land to be divided? 6. How did the committee describe it? 9. Where did Joshua cast the lots? 10.

4.—What tribe had no inheritance? 7. What was their inheritance? 13: 14, 33. What did the other tribes give them? 14: 4. Were the Israelites commanded to give them cities? Num. 35: 1-5. What else? Now get a map with the divisions on it and study it until you can tell what tribes were on the east side of the Jordan, and then on the west side; what two tribes were the most southern; what two were bordering on the sea of Galilee; what one lay between these two and the Mediterranean Sea; what had the smallest territory; what one was divided; what two had their borders both on the Jordan and on the Mediterranean? Where did the remaining one lie?

5.—Did Joshua get anything? 19: 49, 50. Where did he die? 24: 30; Judg. 2: 9. It took seven years to conquer Canaan. How long did the Israelites wander in the desert? Num. 14: 33. How long was it from the time they left Egypt back to the time when God promised Canaan to Abraham? Ex. 12: 40. Add all these together and find how long it was from the time he first promised the land to the time he gave it.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

SHILOH.—About sixteen to eighteen miles north of Jerusalem. Its selection as a place to set up the tabernacle was probably indicated by God himself. Deut. 12: 10, 11. Shiloh continued to be the central place of worship until the time of Samuel. 1 Sam. 4: 3, 4. The people were wont yearly to go up there to worship as they afterward did to Jerusalem. Judg. 21: 19; 1 Sam. 1: 3, 24. It was finally rejected by God as the abiding place of his holy house because of the wickedness of the sons of Eli. 1 Sam. 2: 12–36; 3: 1–21; 4: 1–18; Ps. 78: 60–68; Jer. 7: 12, 14; 26: 6.

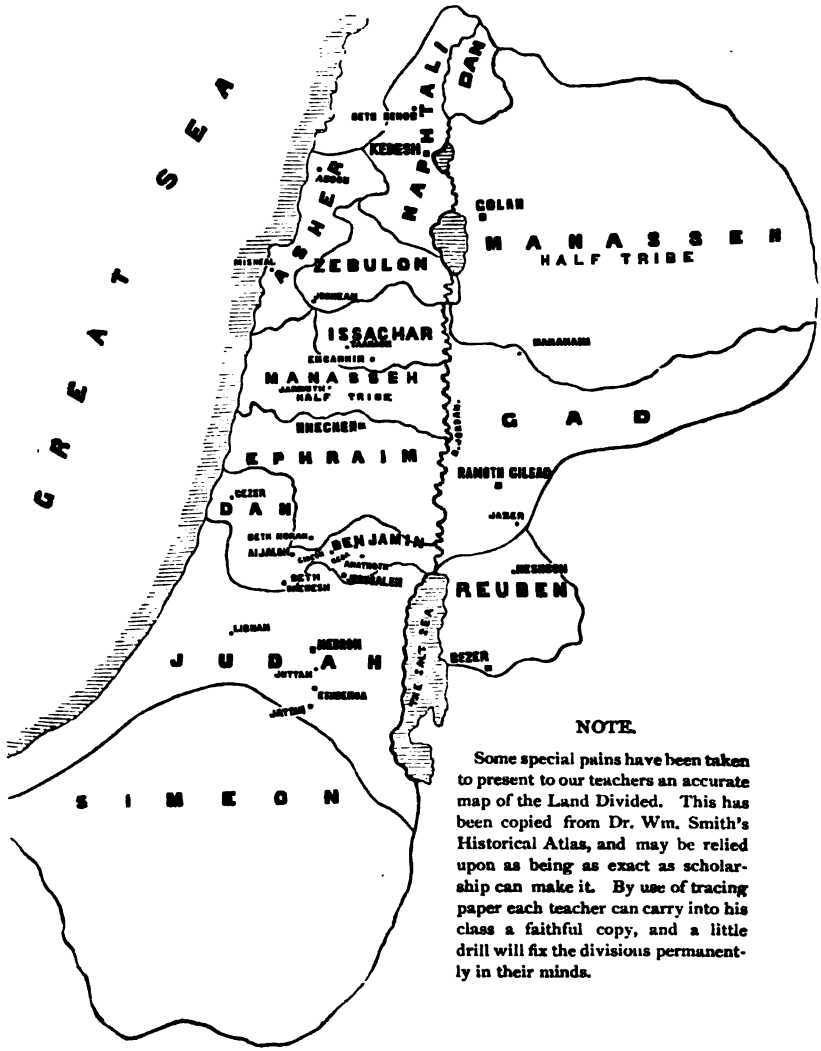
THE LAND DIVIDED.—Before crossing the Jordan, by consent of Moses, Reuben, Gad, and one-half of the tribe of Manasseh, had taken their inheritance on the east side of that river. The reason of their desire to locate there, and the condition of the privilege of so doing are given in Num. 32: 1–32. When reminded of the conditions, how nobly they responded is recorded in Josh. 1: 12–18. In accordance with the permission given them they had built cities. Num. 32: 34–42. The boundaries of their several possessions are given as follows: Reuben—Josh. 13: 15–23; Gad —13: 24–28; Manasseh (one-half) 13: 29–31.

After the land was conquered, and before the period covered in our lesson, Joshua had attempted to carry out the division, in accordance with the command in 13: 6—an attempt partially carried out as shown by chapters 14, 15, 16. In this first unsuccessful effort to divide the land, lots were probably cast for all the nine and one-half tribes. 14: 5. The tribes of Judah and of Ephraim and Manasseh only seem to have accepted the result. Probably the others were indifferent to it, and paid no attention to the procedure. Under this the boundaries of Judah were those given in Josh. 15: 1–12. Her cities, enumerated in the latter part of the chapter, are divided into the *uttermost*, or southern, 21–32; *lowland*, 33–47; *mountain*, 48–60; *desert*, 61, 62. In this proceeding Manasseh and Ephraim, "the children of Joseph," (16: 4,) desiring not to be separated, drew their possessions in one lot, and then afterward made division among themselves. The southern boundary of their whole territory (which, of course, was the southern line of Ephraim) is given in 16: 1–4. The limits of Ephraim, after the two tribes had divided, are described in 16: 5–10, while those of Manasseh are laid in 17: 2–11. Incidentally, it is interesting to notice the explanation of 17: 3, 4 as given in Num. 27: 1–7, and how the incident there narrated gave rise to the law of descent laid down in verses 8–11 following.

THE INDIFFERENCE.—Inasmuch as the possession of the land of Canaan had been their traditional hope for ages, and their energetic desire during their long journey through the wilderness, it seems strange that the tribes were not only not eager to ascertain their several boundaries, but were so indifferent to locating at all that Joshua has to reprove them for their slackness. But they had been nomadic so long that they had come to love a wandering life now that they were in a land where there was plenty of grass and water for their flocks. A vagrant, roving life was an easy, idle one—while the pastures lasted —while boundaries meant work. Besides all this, war even in a good cause unfits for the duties of peace, and renders distasteful the uneventful life of cultivators and herdsmen.

THE SURVEY.—The art of surveying must have been pretty well known to the Israelites—learned by them, probably, from the Egyptians, who were wont, on each subsidence of the Nile, to resurvey the lands whose boundaries had been obliterated during its overflow. In this case, Joshua commands the seven unlocated tribes each to select a committee of three "to walk through the land and describe it." The survey was

not meant, in this instance, to be formally accurate as to boundaries, but was to be described "by cities," so that an approximately even division of the land might be made, reference, of course, being had to character of lands and soil. Possibly, Joshua was thus particular in having so many from each tribe in order to prevent any such complaint as had been made by the children of Joseph. 17: 14–18. As Joshua himself was of them, perhaps they thought their complaint would receive special consideration. His answer shows how they miscalculated and has a spice of irony in it. Yes, "thou art a great people"—then "drive out the Canaanites!" There was another reason for a more careful survey. From the returns made in this new examination, it was evident that there was not


GREAT SEA
NAPHTALI
DAN
KEDESH
COLAN
MANASSEH
HALF TRIBE
ZEBULON
ISSACHAR
MANASSEH
HALF TRIBE
GAD
EPHRAIM
RAMOTH GILEAD
DAN
BENJAMIN
REUBEN
JUDAH
SIMEON
NOTE.
Some special pains have been taken to present to our teachers an accurate map of the Land Divided. This has been copied from Dr. Wm. Smith's Historical Atlas, and may be relied upon as being as exact as scholarship can make it. By use of tracing paper each teacher can carry into his class a faithful copy, and a little drill will fix the divisions permanently in their minds.

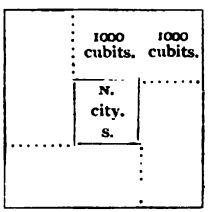
THE LAND DIVIDED.

room enough left for the seven tribes — and so, from Judah, which had more than his portion, was carved the territory of Simeon. 19:9. Even with this re-arranging, the boundaries of Dan proved "too little" for him; but that energetic tribe, unlike the children of Joseph, made no complaint, but enlarged their own borders without aid. 19:47.

THE LOT.—The *location* only was fixed by lot. Num. 26:55. The *magnitude* of the portion was left to the discretion of Moses first, and so, inferentially, to his successor, the size of the tribe governing him as to the extent of its boundaries. Num. 26:54–56; 33:54; 34:13. At the numbering that took place at Sinai, the tribes were reckoned as follows: Judah, 74,600; Issachar, 54,400; Zebulun, 57,400; Reuben, 46,500; Simeon, 59,300; Gad, 46,650; Ephraim, 40,500; Manasseh, 32,200; Benjamin, 35,400; Dan, 62,700; Asher, 41.500; Naphtali, 53,400. How the lot was cast is unknown unless we assume the tradition of the Rabbins to be true. That affirms that there were two urns, into one of which was placed the names of the tribes and into the other the descriptions of the shares. The name of the tribe whose name was first drawn and the lot which was then taken out were ever afterwards indissolubly wedded. The result was considered as the selection of God. In Josh. 19:51; 14:1 we are told by whom the lot was cast. Who the "fathers" were is explained in Num. 34:17–29.

THE INHERITANCES.—The boundaries of the possessions of the different tribes will be found as follows: Benjamin, 18:11–20; cities, 21–28; Simeon, 19:1–9; Zebulun, 19:10–16; Issachar, 19:17–23; Asher, 19:24–31; Naphtali, 19:32–34; cities, 35–39; Dan, 41–46. The blessing pronounced by Moses (Deut. 33) upon the several tribes seems to be in its nature prophetic. The location of Benjamin specially appears to indicate that it was a prophecy. Mount Zion, on which stood the city of Jerusalem, belonged to Judah, but Mount Moriah, the site of the sacred temple, was in the borders of Benjamin. Moses said of this tribe:—"And the Lord shall cover him all the day long and he shall dwell between his shoulders." So does the action of Dan in enlarging his borders. Compare Josh. 19:47 with Deut. 33:22. So, too, are the maritime locations and character of Zebulun and Issachar foreshown in Deut. 33:18, 19. A further study of that remarkable chapter will bring out other coincidences which show that the final distribution of the Israelites over Canaan was pretty clearly mapped out in Moses' mind.

THE LEVITE.—Had no tribal inheritance. "The Lord" and his "sacrifices" were their portion. v. 7; 13:14, 33. Still, they were to be substantially provided for. Their living was not left to voluntary contributions and donation parties. The Israelites were enjoined to give them cities with sufficient suburbs for their cattle. Num. 35:1–5. Keil gives the adjoining diagram as an illustration of the extent of the suburbs allowed them, as mentioned in the reference given. The Levitical cities — forty-eight in all—are all mentioned in Josh. 21. At the numbering of the tribes before referred to, they reckoned up 22,000, and at this time, were probably about the same. It will be seen that our Saviour laid down a law of support for his own disciples more strict even than this (Matt.10:9, 10; Mark 6:8. 9; Luke 9:3; 10:4, 7), but Paul, in part at least, reiterates the law pertaining to the support of the Levites, while disdaining to be any charge himself. 1 Cor. 9:13, 18. It is worthy of note, however, that both Jesus and Paul insist that "the laborer is worthy of his hire."



JOSHUA'S INHERITANCE.—Last of all, as he is best and bravest, comes Joshua and claims for himself a modest possession among his own tribe in Mount Ephraim—Timnath-serah—which, translated, means "remaining portion." Josh.

19:49, 50. He evidently was not of the stuff of which Alexander was made, or he would not have been contented with so humble a portion when his position gave him a chance to grasp all there was. There could be no charge against him that he made himself rich out of the public treasury. Here he died and here he was buried. Josh. 24:30; Jud. 2:9. The place is preserved in the modern *Tibneh*, about seven hours north of Jerusalem.

THE FULFILLMENT.—The events of our lesson are the culminating point of all the previous history of the Jews. It was to this possession of the land of Canaan that they had looked forward for centuries. How their hopes and their faith were centered in it, is in some degree indicated in the Home Readings given with the lesson. This was that which Abraham in faith received; that Jacob saw in vision; the hope of which made the long and bitter bondage of Egypt endurable; the story of which was told by father to son through a half thousand years; and that rose-colored all their future. Four hundred and seventy-seven years before the occupation had the promise been given to Abraham, and the time to its fulfillment nearly indicated. Gen. 15:13. Probably at the time of the Exodus there were not wanting pious patriarchs who knew that the time of their redemption was at hand, and who watched with awe the rapid march of events that showed that the memory of God was at work. Nearly five centuries of waiting, but when the hour came, he was not a moment behind time! He had remembered them in their sojourning and in their bondage; had led them up out of Egypt and through the wilderness; had given them the land and made them see that in general and in particular THE PROMISE WAS FULFILLED.

Wayside Comforts.

1.—The Kingdom of God is yours. Matt. 12:28; 25:34; Luke 11:20; 12:31, 32; 22:29, 30; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 9:25; Heb. 12:28; 2 Pet. 1:11.

2.—How slack people are to avail themselves of God's great gift to men! Matt. 7:13, 14; 20:16; 21:31; 23:37; 25:1–12; Mark 10:24; John 14:9.

3.—God chooses our portion here. Job 23:14; Ps. 37:23; 47:4; Prov. 16:1, 9; 19:21; Is. 46:10; 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Thess. 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:21.

4.—To those who have no possessions in this world, God is a peculiar and special inheritance. Josh. 13:14, 33; Ps. 57:1; 109:31; 142:4, 5; Is. 4:6, 25:4; Heb. 4:16; Jas. 2:5; 1 Peter 5:7; Rev. 2:9.

5. We, likewise, are heirs, but heirs of a better promise, and of a better kingdom. 2 Cor. 6:17, 18; 7:1; Heb. 8:6; Jas. 1:12; 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:25.

6.—He that hath promised is both able and faithful. Luke 1:37, 45; Matt. 19:25, 26; Rom. 4:21; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3; Heb. 6:17–19; 10:23.

HYMN.

How happy every child of grace,
Who knows his sins forgiven!
This earth, he cries, is not my place,
I seek my home in heaven.

A country far from mortal sight,
Yet, oh, by faith I see
The land of rest, the saints delight,
The heaven prepared for me.

BLACKBOARD.

In the Division of

GOD'S KINGDOM

What part or lot

HAVE I?

1—Say to the children that you have a wonderful story to tell them—The Story of The Promise and the Way It was Kept. Then, as graphically as possible, tell them how God led Abraham out of Haran into Canaan, away from his kindred and his father's house, and promised to make of him a great nation and give him the land of Canaan for his people to dwell in. Describe his journey with camels and cattle: follow the plan of the Home Readings in showing the development of the promise and its final fulfillment.

2.—To us God has given a promise of possessing a better country than Canaan. That was a land flowing with milk and honey, but in ours there shall be no hunger, no thirst, no night, no sorrow nor crying. Take Rev. 21 and 22 as a basis for description. Tell them who will be entitled to have possessions there—who not. After we, like the Israelites, have finished our journeyings in the desert and our fightings by the way, we shall hear the Saviour say: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

HYMN.

Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand;
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band.

What brought them to that world above,
That heaven so bright and fair,
Where all is peace, and joy, and love?
How came those children there?

On earth they sought the Saviour's grace,
On earth they loved his name,
So now they see his blessed face,
And stand before the Lamb.

BLACKBOARD.

"COME YE BLESSED
of my Father,
INHERIT THE KINGDOM
Prepared for you
FROM THE FOUNDATIONS
OF THE WORLD."

—*Matt.* 25: 34.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

A LETTER from Rev. Lewis D. Vail, of Philadelphia, recalls an interesting incident concerning the adoption of the International Series of lessons. It most gratefully touches upon the part which Mr. G. G. Lyon, of this magazine, had to do with its adoption. Mr. Vail mentions the fact that after a long discussion in New York in the fall of 1871 upon the possibility of national uniformity, the question of the adoption of such a series was left to a committee consisting of Vincent, Eggleston, Newton, McCook, and Jacobs. "Mr. Jacobs," he says, "was called away by the sickness of one of his family; Dr. Newton could not attend, and the others, not being able to agree upon a plan, prepared a circular announcing that the scheme was abandoned." The failure to agree was a sore disappointment to Mr. Lyon. Meeting Mr. Vail the next morning, he expressed such a desire to have the plan carried out, that it led Mr. Vail to suggest that if Eggleston and Vincent would prepare such a series for 1872 all the rest would be sure to adopt it. Mr. Lyon not only acted on this hint, but re-assembled the scattered members of the committee by telegraph, secured a plan for the coming year which met with the favor predicted for it; and so the National, first, and then the International Series, became a fixed fact. We thank Mr. Vail for his

voluntary testimony in Mr. Lyon's behalf, not because of his connection during life with this periodical, but because of its timely truthfulness, and we tenderly lay it as a laurel wreath on the grave of our lamented friend.

OUR predecessor in the editorial chair, when riding on the cars one day, was both amused and pleased to have the brakeman come in, between stations, and, taking out of his pocket a TEACHER proceed industriously to study his next Sabbath's lesson entirely unconscious of the fact that the editor sat right beside him. A clergyman of this city lately told us that in going out on one of the early morning trains, and having occasion to step into the depot restaurant, he saw one of its waiters bending over THE TEACHER, studying by the light of a lamp. Questioning him he drew out the fact that he was a Sabbath-school teacher, and that he could not con his lesson at any other time. But these two instances are matched by still another. A couple coming to this city to see the publishers of this magazine, and failing to find a directory, at the depot, with but little hope of getting any information, asked a colored young man if he could direct them to the office of THE TEACHER. Smiling and instantly pulling a copy out of his pocket, he showed his astonished enquirers the address, and they came along with the conviction that everybody must take THE TEACHER! It *has* a large constituency, but the incidents are chiefly valuable as showing that our best teaching force may not be entirely located among the more favored classes. All disparities of circumstances and attainments may be more than leveled away by those who study between stations and who get up before daylight and master their lessons by the light of a kerosene lamp.

WHEN a man does a good work, and, for the sake of its example, tells about it, we are sorry that he does so over his initials instead of over his full name. Such impersonality lacks the full influence of the personal location of the facts. People want to be able to say in relation to any new experiment that it was successfully tried by John Jones, of Smithville—not by S. S. G., of Nowhere-in-particular. The owner of those initials, however, tells a very interesting story in the *Presbyterian Banner*. He is a clergyman, who, while deprecating the non-attendance of children upon the church, did not stop to lament over the fact nor to inflict a rebuke upon parents for it, but went to work to see what he could do to remedy the matter. Having effected his purpose by the method he narrates below, he says in relation to those pulpit discourses that soar far above a child's comprehension, that "you can expect neither man nor child to sit regularly under sermons that are spoken in an unknown tongue." He proves at least that there is no need of making them do it, as the following will show:

During the opening exercises of the Sabbath-school, I take a few minutes to question the children upon the sermon of the preceding Sabbath morning. They are examined as to where and what the text was; the opening thoughts of the sermon; the heads of the sermon; the leading thoughts of each part; the persons and places spoken of; and somewhat fully upon the personal application of the discourse. The success of this plan is seen in a large and increasing attendance of the children in the sanctuary. It is seen in the bright and fixed attention of the children. It is seen in the talk at home about the sermon, thus awakening deeper attention on the part of all, parents and children, to the preaching of the word. It is seen in the intelligent and accurate answers which the children give to the questions addressed to them. And my experience already convinces me that the most of the children in our churches to-day, with the superior advantages they have in the day school and in the Sabbath-school, apprehend and remember a sermon as well as the most of the adults who attend upon divine worship. The fullest and most accurate outline of any sermon I have ever preached, I have received from a boy about fourteen years of age.

No one can read about the early life of John Stuart Mill without a sad pity for the boy that grew up without a mother and without God. He had no childhood, but was hurried across that

happy pleasure land into a premature, non-childish age, marked by an unnatural learning and a precocious wrestling with grave questions of ethics and religion to which the father authoritatively appended the utilitarian philosophy as a correct solution. Scarcely any boy can be found whose parents take such pains to instill into him the principles of the Christian religion as were taken in his case to keep them out. His father took infinite care to take out of his life all that would redeem and bless it. And yet this was not done without some natural rebellion on his part. He himself tells how, in reading Marmontel's *Memories*, he was moved to tears over the self-abnegation of a boy, who, on the death of his father, was inspired with the resolve to be to the family all that his father had been. This glimpse of the nobleness of a life of self-denial showed to him how degradingly mean was a life in which personal happiness is the highest motive. All that was best in him responded to this act of self-sacrifice. It was the Christ-spirit in the conduct of the boy that touched the heart of Mill. If, at this period, which he calls "a crisis in my mental history," instead of Marmontel's *Memories*, he had read the wonderful, self-denying life-service of Christ and his voluntary sacrifice of himself upon the cross, "the just for the unjust," he and the world might possibly have been incalculably the richer for it.

It is said that Stephen Paxson, the veteran Sunday-school missionary, in twenty years' time, organized thirteen hundred and fourteen schools, into which were gathered seventy thousand scholars. We can assure him that he has by no means faded from the recollection of those for whom he has done such brave pioneer work. A writer in the *Sunday School World* says that with his memories he is the "richest man in St. Louis." We can well understand how that may be, and that "his old memorandum gives him a hundred fold more pleasure than a bank book with certificates of tens of thousands." The same writer preserves for us this incident of his work:

> On one occasion, as he was about to organize a school, an old man rose and said: "See here, neebors, I know that old chap over thar. I used to live in Illernoy, and one day my boy said as how a Sunday-school man had rived, and was gwine fur to start a schule. I told my old woman we had got to leave, for when Sunday-schools came along game allers got scace. So over I went to Hancock county. Two years arter that, that there same chap was up to Hancock county. Then we packed and came clar along to Missouri. And now that are same chap's here. See here, stran-ger! I aint gwine to run no furder, for as I told my old woman ye'd follow me to Canifory if I did. So I've come for to see what sort of a thing this Sunday-school mought be. I guess as how it's a heap bettern I tho't. I'm treed square, and here's yer dollar."

We see that Rev. James B. Simmons, D.D., thinks that an adult Bible School instead of a Sunday-school for children, or, rather, the two united is what is just now wanted. In a communication to the *Examiner and Chronicle* he says: "All parties should work for it, and pray for it, and preach about it, and talk about it, and make sacrifices for it until they get it." He asserts that such a thing can be had; that it takes time and effort of course to bring it about, and that those who are not willing to pay the price must do without it. But having himself tried the experiment and made a success of it, he testifies that the results are worth a thousand times more than the cost. While a pastor in Philadelphia for twenty successive Sabbaths he received accessions to the church from his adult Bible School. Since he left, the school was continued with like remarkable effect, about one hundred uniting with the church the year thereafter, about the same number coming in the second year, and, under the present pastor, the stream is still unfailing. In view of such a history Mr. Simmons says that he is amazed, thoroughly amazed that other pastors do not avail themselves of such an arm of power. If Mr. Simmons' experience were the only one of the kind, we should not be

at all inclined to take part in his astonishment, but inasmuch as there are a goodly number of others confirmatory of his, we confess we are a little surprised at the reluctance of so many even to try the eligibility of a Bible School. But still, every now and then some one does try it, and, like Mr. Simmons, cries out "Eureka!" and becomes thenceforth its ardent advocate. It will be universal yet.

THE engraving by Dore of the taking of Jericho, published in the last *Illustrated Bible Studies*, is strikingly impressive—or would be if it could be separated from the Biblical narrative which inspired it. In the foreground are the massive walls toppling down, crushing and burying beneath the ruins their unhappy defenders. So far the story is admirably and powerfully depicted, but the rest is ludicrously at variance with the facts. Instead of the seven priests blowing the seven trumpets of rams' horns, the imaginative artist has increased them to a respectable phalanx, placed at least nine trumpets in their hands whose want of curvature is suggestive of anything but the horns of a ram. Then Joshua himself is put well out in front of the priestly procession, mounted on what appears to be a little Indian pony, supported by a group of horsemen belonging to the middle ages, and blowing one of those rectilinear trumpets with all his might. Besides these little inaccuracies, the ark itself is exhibited uncovered—a thing which had the expressed divine prohibition. We marvel that so great an artist as Dore should have taken such liberties with the Scriptural narrative, and that such a journal as the *Illustrated Bible Studies* should have been content to put it side by side with its own exposition of it!

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

OUR new and sprightly educational namesake, the *National Teachers' Monthly*, in view of the lasting injury done to the young recipient of a prize, and of the passions aroused in the breasts of his unsuccessful rivals, believes that "the whole system of prize-giving is vicious, and that the donor of a prize for school children is a well-meaning malefactor."———In a late sermon, Spurgeon affirms that the Sabbath-school "gives the church the hope of being furnished with the best men and women. The church's Samuels and Solomons are made wise in their youth; her Davids and Josiahs were tender of heart when they were tender in years. Read the lives of the most eminent ministers, and you shall usually find that their Christian history began early."——— Attention has been called frequently of late among our exchanges to the absurdity of supposing that "anybody is good enough to teach classes of small children." But it was left to the Dean of Cashel fully to set forth the folly of such a belief. He was reminded by it of the medical student who diffidently said that he had not as yet got very far along in his profession, *but he could cure children.*———Dr. Ormiston, after asserting that the task is more difficult than the work of college professors, illustrated the subject in a different way and in a manner peculiarly his own. "When a boy," he says, "I amused myself, as is common in Scotland, in hunting birds' nests. In order to feed the callow young birds it was necessary to chirp to them like the old bird to get them to open their mouths to receive the food. I found that chirping right was very difficult. So you infant class teachers will find it difficult to 'chirp right.'" The mother-bird feeling has to be pretty strong in one in order to be able to get the knack of that chirp. But when one has that there is no difficulty whatever.——— S. H. Tyng, Jr.,

relates that when a boy he was a member of St. George's Sunday-school which was then regarded as just about perfect, and which was superintended by his father. Among the visitors who came to see the school was one who thought such excellence must be the product of a perfect code and perfect organization under it, and so asked to see the Constitution and By-laws. The answer, delivered with great dignity, was: "Our Constitution is all spelt in the word LOVE." And that Constitution has a perpetual hold upon its subjects. Dr. Tyng is even now one of the most willing and efficient servants of the Sunday-school.——— *The Presbyterian* affirms, that, so far as personal scrutiny goes, parents would never know even "if Mormonism were taught in the Sabbath-school," unless the children should happen to let it out. Families that see that their children are prepared for the Sabbath-school and that question them after they return from it are rare exceptions. And yet, even if the Sunday-school were triple the value that it is, we would not exchange our evening studies and prayer with our own boys for all that it could possibly do for them.———The expositor who gives the "interior" meaning of the Sunday-school lessons for the *New Jerusalem Messenger* certainly has a wonderful way of putting things. Here, for instance, is a sample from the lesson on The Crossing of the Jordan: "The waters that came down from above represent knowledges of interior things. These became abundant, and arose to higher degrees of intelligence. The waters from the salt sea represent the knowledges of natural things, which were cut off, that is, were, at the time, quiescent, because the knowledges of interior things were most active. The waters of Jordan did not destroy the lives of the Israelites but allowed the people to pass over safely. It is here represented that knowledges of truth do not destroy, or condemn, those who use them for regeneration; but the regenerating mind passes safely, through knowledges, into genuine life." When we were in college it used to be said as a joke that "a chimera-obscura ruminating in a vacuum devoured second intentions." It is more than probable that one so apt at seeing the "interior" meaning of things can translate that into sensible prose. We could do it ourselves if we could only do as much for such expositions. As it is, it passes our "knowledges."———*The Examiner and Chronicle* thinks there is a tendency to go to extremes, and says: "One superintendent has the singing fever, another makes the blackboard the principal feature, another is great in geography, or biography, and so on. In some schools great emphasis is placed on giving, in others committing verses to memory is made the chief end of children. Punctuality, orderly behavior, questioning scholars, visiting them at homes, etc., are all made hobbies by some people sooner or later. Now, the fact is, all these things are good; but what is wanted is due proportion. Puddings are not good if made all of flour or all of plums."

Sunday School Work.

We are sorry to chronicle the fact, but the Reformed Church is likely to drop out of the ranks and train by itself. The Eastern Synod of that church lately recommended the preparation of a series of lessons in accordance with their distinctive doctrines and usages. The complaint has been that the present series is not "churchly" enough. In accordance with that resolution a committee was appointed, a series recommended, and the *Guardian* is now publishing the same. The first lessons are on the Epiphany, and Scripture and

Catechism are sandwiched according to Reformed Church notions. While we have no right to complain of such action, yet, if that church finds that when off by itself it loses something of the enthusiastic spirit that pervades the main army, and that the loss is not compensated for by anything it has gained by the separation, we shall be glad to see it once more keeping step with the International Sunday-school host.——— But while the Reformed Church people are going into a camp of their own, to drill exclusively according to their own tactics, the Friends of North Carolina with their sober uniform and broad-brims, have wheeled into line and filled the gap. To the first named let us suggest: Is it possible that Reforms ever go backward?———The children this last December must have had an unusually happy Christmas. Since that day of mutual good wishes and inter-presentations, the mails have come to us laden with the newspaper records of the ways in which the Sunday-schools helped the little ones to double their Christmas happiness. Many of the exercises were both impressive and beautiful, and all seem to have been successful in adding a new brightness to that joyful day.——— On the first of the year *The Sunday School Times* came to us in quarto form, so changed by its sudden metamorphosis that we should hardly have recognized it, but for the decemvirate of prominent Sunday-school men whose faces appeared upon its cover as a voucher for its identity. Opening it we found that their guaranty was made good—it was the same old *Times*. Baker is not one of those men that can disguise himself by putting on a clean collar! But, seriously, the change is for the better, and its readers are the gainers by it both in its greater convenience and in the amount of its matter.———Looking at the ten men just referred to (Wells, Vincent, Ormiston, Tyler, Trumbull, Peltz, Crosby, etc.) though they appear as earnest and enthusiastic as heart could wish, yet one is also struck by their balance and thoughtfulness as well. Evidently there is not a particle of justification for the fear that the Sunday-school cause has been entrusted to leaders who have got the bits between their teeth and are running away with the whole concern to inevitable destruction. The men to whom these faces belong are men who think twice before they act, or else their physiognomies belie them.———Mr. Walter C. Tisdel, of Painesville, O., as the result of a year of patient effort, has now what we should imagine to be one of the most charming Sunday-school rooms to be found anywhere. The old one has been made over, and in the process has been obliterated. Special attention has been paid to ventilation—good air and a pure gospel are more inseparable than many people fancy. The intermediate department has been bountifully provided for in the way of Sunday-school appliances, but it was an unusual thoughtfulness that placed a hundred little arm-chairs in the infant-class room. A great deal of the restless uneasiness of the primary classes is the weariness that comes from hard benches and unaccommodating seats. Those arm-chairs have lightened the task of the primary teachers by half.———Mrs. Helen Strang has taught the primary class at Milburn, in this State, so long that she has lived to see one of her "infants" the superintendent of the school, and her supply is not yet exhausted.———J. Bennet Tyler has been chosen joint editor with Dr. Dulles, of the Sunday-school publications of the Presbyterian Board. That means new vigor in that department. He has just completed a normal class book, which will soon appear, and is holding Sabbath-school institutes here and there in his large field. And wherever he goes he leaves a luminous track behind him. Testimonies of the value of his visits are sure to be published by the men whom he has made enthusiastic. ———Vincent issues a new magazine which he calls the *Normal Class*. Haven't seen it.———F. H. Revell, of

Chicago, has also started one called *The International Lesson Monthly*, the lessons to which are furnished by B. F. Jacobs, and the primary lessons by Mrs. Crafts. We have evidently done so much toward its "make-up" by unsuspectingly acting as a model that we are afraid to commend it too highly.———A "grasshoppered" Sunday-school in Kansas wants a second-hand library. What school will donate one? The address of the school to be aided will be sent on request. The Kansas Sunday-schools, by the way, in spite of the destitution there have been notably prompt in renewing for such necessities as THE TEACHER. They are no willing suppliants for help. ———E. C. Wilder was re-elected president of the New York City Sunday School Association—a position that he has filled for five consecutive years. He knows how to "manage," and that accounts for the prosperity of that organization under him.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—The ingenious man who handles the crayon in the Presbyterian Sunday-school at LaFayette, Ind., has invented a substitute for the blackboard that is a decided improvement upon it. He uses sheets of white paper, tacked on to a smooth board, and black crayons. The superiority of this method consists in this, that whatever is put upon the paper can be distinctly seen from all parts of the room, while, at certain angles, chalk marks are utterly invisible. Another point in its favor is that each sheet, after being used, can be torn off and fixed on the wall, and so help in the review from week to week, while the accumulation of three months would of themselves furnish good material for a quarterly review.

—"The first thing to find out," says Ralph Wells, "is the pivot on which the lesson turns." This was said to the New York Normal Class as a preliminary to his lesson on the Anointing at Bethany, the "pivot" to which he had found only after two days of hard study, and which he announced to be "*Nothing too good for Jesus.*" On the same occasion he gave the following practical hint in relation to picture-drawing that those of our friends will appreciate who have often desired to take some illustrations into their classes but have not done so on account of the apparent impossibility of transferring them to paper:

When I was in Canada some years ago, attending a convention, I came into the parlor of the house where I was stopping, on my way to the session, where I supposed I was going to teach the people something. Instead I learned a lesson. A young girl sat in the parlor hard at work with her pencil. I said to her, "Daughter, what are you doing?" "Oh, only getting out my Sunday-school lesson." She had some slips of tracing-paper which she laid over the pictures in a book, and was illustrating her lesson. Now you know I don't draw, (laughter) but I saw instantly I could do that. I get so discouraged often when teachers say, "Oh, yes, that is very well for you," so that I am resolved to do nothing that any one may not do. Ten cents' worth of paper will last you a whole session, and in producing these (eight or ten) I spent about fifteen minutes. It is better and easier than holding pictures against a window-pane, and besides you do not get caricatures.

—It is said in the *Sunday School World* that W. R. Burnham, of Connecticut, after ten years of trial, strongly recommends an organ voluntary just before the beginning of the school. He likes it especially because it so completely gains the attention of those present, and because it will make almost any naturally boisterous boy tiptoe to his seat for fear of disturbing the school, instead of rushing in like a young hurricane. It answers, too, the purpose of an admonitory bell, for, when the time to open arrives, a mere gesture is all that is necessary—order has been already

secured. Of course the larger the organ the more impressive it would be, but even a cabinet organ, well played, would not fail to produce a marked effect.

LITERATURE.

JUST now there is nothing more needed than a good *Normal Class Manual*. The vague talk that there has been in regard to normal class methods has not enlightened many people as to what those methods are. They have been strenuously urged, but not explained. We welcome, therefore, the manual jointly prepared by Dr. Alvah Hovey and Dr. J. M. Gregory. That which makes a normal Sunday-school teacher is, first, a comprehensive, intelligent knowledge of the Bible, and, second, the ability rightly to impart such knowledge to others. He must know What to teach and How to teach it. Dr. Hovey gives instruction in regard to the first requisite — Dr. Gregory in regard to the second. Dr. Hovey treats upon, I.—*The Bible* — its divine origin — classification and design of its several books; II.—*Its Interpretation* — rules of — helps to — types and symbols—difficulties, and how to treat them; III.—*Contents of the Bible* — history and chronology — geography — manners and customs — religious appointments — doctrines. Dr. Gregory has twelve papers covering the place, purpose, and organization of the Sunday-school, how to prepare and how to teach, together with the other obligations resting upon the teachers and officers.

On account of its size, the book necessarily is not an exhaustive treatise, but within the limits by which the authors were confined, they have given a clear and comprehensive view of the subjects treated upon; such as will do much to fit teachers for their work. We are a little sorry that the book was written only for Baptist teachers from a Baptist standpoint. Dr. Hovey's definition of baptism as immersion, and his citations on the meaning of the word *Baptizo* show that he was thinking only of Baptist teachers. But the work is worthy of a larger circulation, and that point may well be remitted to the care of the technical books of the denomination. We hope that future editions will be modified so as to give it a wider usefulness by eliding from it such controversial points. Philadelphia: The Bible and Publication Society. Chicago: C. R. Blackall. $1.

"THE miracle of Emancipation" has lost the freshness of its interest. Slavery having ceased to be one of the vexing problems has almost passed out of the popular thought, and appears only in anti-slavery reunions and "reminiscences" of anti-slavery days. It is, therefore, an unexpected call when an author summons us to hear a story whose interest arises from the cruel and absurd injustice of those laws which declared a black man to be a "human brute." Still, if any one supposes that he can not now be affected by a recital of the wrongs made possible by those laws, or that he knows the full malignity of the evil from which we have been freed, he has only to read Henry Churton's *Toinette* to be undeceived. Had the story been written before the war it would have been a strong reinforcement to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, though decidedly unlike that book in spirit, plot, and treatment. As it is, it is a valuable contribution both to the historical and the dramatic literature concerning slavery. We say historical as well as dramatic, for Mr. Churton shows an intimate acquaintance with the laws of Virginia, which regulated the "peculiar institution," and gives us the benefit of it. We shall be surprised if he does not find a large audience. New York: J. B. Ford & Co. Chicago: W. B. Keen & Cooke.

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THE BLOOD AVENGER.

BY REV. C. D. HELMER.

THE translators of our English Bible used two words—avenger and revenger—to describe the same kind of person. In the 35th chapter of Numbers, which contains the specific directions about cities of refuge and the treatment of the crime of murder, the word most generally employed is revenger.

But among the finer outgrowths and sweeter fruits of the development of Christianity in the world is that illuminated conscience which perceives a clear distinction between these words. Revenge may be a part of barbarism; but it is utterly unchristian and *anti*-Christian. The old law of retaliation is abolished in the new order of human society, under the gospel administration. If a bully slaps your right cheek, the Master's injunction is to offer the left to the same brutal hand. Whether the manly desciple will do just that literal thing or not, depends upon several conditions that there is no space here to name.

At the same time we are to recognize an old idea which is indeed a universal principle, that the man who does wrong to his fellow must, somehow, be made to suffer for it. And as the greatest wrong, ordinarily, that can be perpetrated, is maliciously to take the life of another, so the penal equivalent for it is the forfeited life of the slayer. This seems to have been generally recognized by mankind as the demand of natural justice. Among the Hebrews it was, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, property for property, life for life."

This is the real basis for the law of retaliation. And in the Mosaic legislation the deliberate murderer must himself be slain, without any possible compensation or substitute—his own blood alone can atone for that which his hands have shed.

This, however, in the time of Moses was only a re-enactment of an old Divine law issued to Noah and his family shortly after the deluge. The 35th chapter of Numbers is to be read in the light of the 9th of Genesis. In that prior legislation the plain requirement was, *blood for blood*. Even the brute animals were to be held responsible for the blood of man, although not for that of similar animals. And, as for the human, "whoso sheddeth *man's* blood by *man* shall his blood be shed." The execution of justice was thus definitely placed within the power of society; it

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became one of the human duties. The murderer was not to be slain by a stroke of divine interposition; there were to be no miraculous beheadings or hangings. And this becomes the divine basis of human tribunals—judges, executives—the paraphernalia of commercial courts. "The powers that be are ordained of God."

Underneath it all lies the great fundamental idea and fact of the sanctity of life. And the visible symbol of life is the *blood*. Hence Noah and his posterity, after the flood, while permitted to eat the flesh of beasts, were strictly forbidden to drink the blood. Probably for at least two good reasons, viz., (1) that such a use of blood would brutalize, even bestialize man; and (2) because blood, as the symbol of life, was divinely ordained to take a grand part in the religious development of the race.

When, now, the Israelites were to become an independent nation this old Noachian statute of life for life, or the death-penalty for murder, was re-enacted as a part of their national code. At the same time, however, a clear line of distinction was drawn between accidental homicide and deliberate murder. For those who had committed the former deed there were appointed cities of refuge, within whose limits they might be safe from the blood-avenger, who was the next of kin to the person slain. So that this particular law was intended to be in the interest of the criminal himself. Prior to that time the avenger of blood had his stern duty to perform.

And in this the Hebrews were not different from the other peoples of authority. It was, even among other nations, a requirement of their religion to avenge the death of a kinsman; not to do it was to be not simply cowardly, but also immoral and irreligious. For him who failed in this duty there was no honor in this world and no reward in the next.

What the Mosaic legislation did was, to accept this general sentiment and practice of mankind, in the rude periods of human history prior to the final establishment of civil institutions, and to regulate it unto the high end of a merciful justice. It looked in the direction of a higher civilization; as indeed all those Mosaic institutes did. What it specially concerned was the innate sanctity of human life. It tended to render man sacred in his own eyes; it appointed a limit to human passion, and placed a check upon it. There lay deep and solid underneath it the old Noachian conception of the *brotherhood* of man. Human relations, taking the local family as the real type, are of the most sacred kind. To slay a literal brother in the domestic circle has always been regarded as something most horribly unnatural and heinous. And when this fundamental idea of the human brotherhood once wholly possesses the world, murder will be as monstrous to public opinion as fratricide now is to the best of us.

Eight centuries later than the time of Moses, the famous Grecian law-maker, Draco, undertook to do for the Athenians what this regulation of the rights of the blood-avenger did for the Jews, viz., give the man-slayer a better chance for actual justice. Draco appointed different places for the holding of the court to try the homicide; the place in each case being determined by the question of intention or malice, although prior to that, when the murderer, or killer of man must receive his sentence from the senate of the Areopagus, his doom was to die for his deed, without the allowance of any qualifying or justifying circumstances whatever: from which it appears, contrary to the notions of not a few moderns who venture to charge the Hebrew code with cruelty, that Moses was vastly in advance of his times. For while the avenger of blood among the Israelites must continue to perform his time-honored duty, the man-slayer was relieved, in a measure, by cities specially appropriated to his use as places of security against the vindictive pursuer.

That this way of escape from the

consequences of an ill deed carries with it a large *symbolic meaning* would seem to be evident enough. The fact that the man who sheds the blood of his brother man must atone for the deed by the loss of his own life is only an illustration of a general principle. This principle is that the evil-doer must bear the legitimate consequences of his evil doings. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Moral wrong is an offence to the universe; and all moral forces combine to punish the offender. In other words, the wrong-doer finds upon his track a pursuing retribution in the very constitution of things. The ancient Greeks believed in the Eumenides — the vengeful pursuers of bad men, conceived of as goddesses, kind in disposition and venerable in character. They were furies to the evil-doer and especially to the murderer; but benignant to all upright and virtuous beings.

But mankind, the aggregate human family, is an evil-doer by universal confession; and so, the Eumenides are on the track of the race; the moral blood-avenger pursues the guilty everywhere. This is why "conscience makes cowards of us all." And there can be no more vital question for mankind than this: "Is there any escape? Are there cities of refuge? What hope is there for us?"

This is the question all religions try to answer. The Christian gospel makes reply most explicitly, most wonderfully; and with the highest inspirations for the troubled and desponding soul, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, says: "I am the way," the way to the city of refuge; "I am the door," into a fold indeed, but the fold is a place of refuge and protection; "I am the life," and he who has forfeited his own by his wrong-doing may obtain from me "*life everlasting*," which is a perpetual escape from the blood-avenger. And thus the great question for the ages and the race is answered: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." In him the function of the blood-avenger, both literal and typical, ceases forever.

METHODS OF SELF CONQUEST.

BY REV. E. F. WILLIAMS.

"TO him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne."

That the earthly life of our Lord Jesus was a struggle and a victory is a fact of special interest to every believer. The Saviour's struggle came through the limitations involved in his incarnation, through obscurity, and friends who could not understand him, through the temptation in the wilderness, through the indifference of multitudes to his message of life, through the deadly hatred of scribes and Pharisees, through the infidelity of professed followers, through the assumption of a physical nature whose weakness was accompanied with every pain which we ourselves feel, and which, like our own, was subject to the power of death. These and kindred trials united with the spiritual foes which Satan armed against him to render the life of our Lord on the earth a life of bitter and unceasing conflict.

The disciple may not suffer less than his Master. He is engaged in a contest co-extensive with his whole earthly career and pertaining to every department of his being. "Virtue," says John Stuart Mill, "is artificial,— the result of victory over indwelling evil." Education is discipline. Care, judgment, the skill that comes from experience, are required in every trade and profession. The *best* life, the life that models itself after the highest standards, seeks to

cherish the purest affections, and fill up its days with the best deeds, is of necessity a struggle. No one can acquire the strength of a Christian manhood except by passing safely through the perils of childhood and youth. At every step there are foes; foes *fleshly*, inherited infirmities, showing themselves in lust and vicious habit; foes *mental*, dim and uncertain conceptions of truth and duty, fatal conclusions drawn from false premises, the "chimeras dire" of doubt and fear; foes *spiritual*, "principalities and powers," a vast though invisible army, equipped and controlled by one whose only aim is to dishonor God and ruin man. As Christians we can not forget that "we were bondmen," enslaved in Egypt, that thirst, hunger, Amalekites, idolatry, and with many of us the wanderings of weary years, have tried our courage, patience, and faith. Possibly like Israel of old, when on the verge of the "promised land" we were pushed back and told to enter into our possessions by a way that took us through the "valley of the serpents," and brought us face to face with Amorites and Midianites combining to dispute our advance. These last foes having been overcome, and the territory they occupied divided among our friends, perhaps the leader under whose directions we achieved our victories has "fallen asleep," leaving a new man in his place, our Jordan still uncrossed, our Canaan still unoccupied. If so, lessons full of encouragement in future efforts for self-conquest may be gathered from the *methods* by which the Lord enabled Joshua to drive out the foes of his people.

First of all we must learn *to obey God*. In spite of murmurings and impatience at delay, Israel did not *dare* refuse to go forward when "the cloud lifted," or to follow the "ark" into the "swollen waters." And yet the course the Lord marked out was not the natural one to take. Israel would have entered the land from the south rather than from the east, provoked a battle with the strongest foes first, marched against the Anakim and the fortified mountain towns, and by roads which would have proved impassable. Christians are frequently disappointed in not being permitted to enter the promised land of *self-control* by the direct and most natural routes. We are anxious to overcome our most terrible enemies first, to reform those habits of evil which have fast hold of us, before entering into the believer's possessions through faith in the Saviour. God will not permit us to have our desire. He will not expose us to the dangers of defeat, or suffer us to engage in battles which we have not strength to fight.

We must remember that *the Lord's methods of helping his children magnify his power and his grace*. In delivering the Israelites from one difficulty he led them into others apparently still more formidable. Sihon and Og, Balak and Balaam were seemingly in a position to make a better fight than the kings of Hebron and Jerusalem. And when they were overcome, and their territory occupied, the Jordan with "full banks" was a barrier to further advance. And *Moses was dead*. But the Lord's power does not depend upon the life of any man however great or good. So Joshua is magnified in the sight of the people, and they are taught that with God all things are possible. No one ever enters into a spiritual Canaan except by way of a Jordan which he feels that he can not cross. And no one ever obeys the command to go forward and fails to find dry ground for his feet.

Again, Christians sometimes forget that entrance into Canaan is "*for good*," permanently. The Lord does not divide the waters for his people to bring them back at the first approach of danger. As soon as they are over the manna ceases, they eat of "the old corn of the land," and are thereby reminded that henceforth they must depend upon their own exertions, and the productions of a hostile country, for their bread. Gilgal is fortified as a base of supplies *for the war*. By the rite of circumcision,

which renews the covenant, and the celebration of the passover, the tribes are made to feel that they have at length entered into the land given "the fathers." But their work is not done; the land is to be conquered and parcelled out among the families of Israel. In enabling Joshua to do this, the Lord shows us *the wisdom of taking possession of the most important points first.* Israel's camp at Gilgal is *central.* When Jericho, Bethel, and Ai have fallen, the forces of the enemy are divided. The kings of the north and the south can not combine against Joshua without his knowledge. They can not prevent his striking them separately, and taking their cities one by one.

It is of immense importance for Christians to enter *at once* into the full consciousness of their privileges as children of God. They are *in* Canaan as soon as they have crossed the Jordan. They have yet to conquer their foes. But the Lord is with them, to give victory as at Jericho, or defeat as at Ai, to show them their absolute dependence on his mercy, the need of perfect obedience to his commands, his readiness to forgive transgression when repented of and put away, and his purpose to establish them in his land of promise against every possible combination of hostile kings. A bold passage over the Jordan and a determination to stay in Canaan at *all hazards* are more than half the victory. The center of the enemy's lines is pierced. He can not reunite them. The occupation of Gilgal is a pledge of victory over the whole land.

Taking the Lord as our leader, we shall learn to *strike our enemies suddenly and with all our might.* Nor shall we be satisfied unless they are exterminated. Joshua's only fault was in not completely annihilating his foes. They troubled Israel for centuries. *Spiritual victories are of value only as they are thorough.* It may not be best to attack our strongest foes first. Nor may we expect to overcome them all in a single battle, but when we do strike we must make our blows tell.

Our first duty is to cross the Jordan and establish ourselves in Gilgal, the "camp of liberty," whence we may go forth to lay siege to the Jerichos of worldliness, and to strike down the kings of Intemperance, Sensuality, Pride, and Avarice. To gain these victories *faith is indispensable.* "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." We can not go forward in our own strength, nor of our own impulse. *We must abandon ourselves to the Lord.* He marks out our campaigns, gives the directions which he expects us to follow. Over-confidence on our part, or disobedience, will surely be punished by bitter defeat. But if the Lord's children, we fall to rise again, to make new conquests day by day, till we attain to the assurance that we "have overcome, and have set down with Jesus on his throne."

THE ONE ALTAR.

BY MRS. W. H. DANIELS.

ALL the imagery of the Old Testament reaches out toward the cross of Christ. Trope, and type, and history overflow with it. It is the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, up which human wants climb, and down which heavenly blessings descend. It is the column, capped by cloud,—a guide and defence. It is the lifted serpent, a healing wisdom. As two angels were sent to guard the tree of life in Eden, so is the sacredness of this Tree of Life defended by flaming sword and voice from heaven. Only one gate led to Paradise—only one Way leads to heaven.

From the earliest records of God's

care over his chosen people, this is the lesson he teaches them over and over. Saved by the blood of one Lamb, set apart in one Red Sea baptism, led by one manifestation of God to the sacred mountain where he declared himself the only object of adoration—"The Lord our God is one Lord"—they were thus prepared to understand the form of worship he gave them as indeed a "type of the heavenly things."

The central thought in that worship was sacrifice. Such animals as required and received man's care, and constituted his wealth, were selected as types of his affections and desires, to be consecrated to God. The offering was made by fire, because it is the great purifier, and because the ascending flame typified the uplifted hearts of those on whose behalf the sacrifice was offered. So full was this type of spiritual meaning that the material, size, structure, and situation of the altar of burnt offering were thought worthy of the most minute description, in the directions given to Moses on the mount.

Daily, during the forty years of sojourn in the wilderness, from the heart of the immense camp ascended the smoke of sacrifice, while numberless thousands on their knees watched its upward progress, each heart thrilling with its significance; for this innocent victim died that Israel might be forgiven.

But when they came to the promised land, and were dispersed over its fertile plains, rejoicing in their rich heritage, and no longer within sight of the tabernacle of Jehovah, how should this unity of sacrifice be maintained? Must not each tribe now build an altar to the Most High, and bow before it with the same rites, at the same hour, but still with separate offerings? Can questions of convenience and economy have no place in the decision of this matter? or is *the one altar* the great point,—the *heart* of the dispensation. God said, "Take heed that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place thou seest; but in the place that the Lord shall choose, in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings."

So when the hostile nations were overthrown, and the fair land was ready for division, all the rejoicing families of Israel gathered at Shiloh, and there set up the tabernacle. *Its* rest should first be established; all through the years of their wandering it had been their guide; henceforth it was to be their assurance of God's abiding presence with them. At Shiloh Joshua divided the land by lot among the seven tribes, for whom Moses had not provided; and blessed them, and sent them to their long expected homes.

At last Israel had learned to fear and hate idolatry. No more worship of the gods of Egypt and Moab; no more tampering with the sacredness of priesthood,—Korah was not yet forgotten; no more attempts to grow rich at God's expense, as Achan had done. The nation, victorious over its enemies, through the might of God, and at rest from its warfare, renders undivided worship to its Divine deliverer.

One can conceive then the horror with which the tribes in Canaan "heard say" that the tribe of Reuben, and the tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh had built an altar on the borders of Jordan. Had these distant tribes so soon forgotten the command of God, the sacred mystery of the one altar, enforced by God's solemn declaration: "He that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord, even that man shall be cut off from among his people?"

Quickly the news flies from tribe to tribe, and every warrior arms himself once more, in the name of God. No more rest or rejoicing until this crooked way is made straight. The dear tie of brothers' blood must be forgotten, if the purity of God's kingdom demands it.

But warfare is the last—not the first—method which God prescribes for the reclaiming of heretics. "If thou shalt hear say, In one of thy cities which the

Lord thy God hath given thee, to dwell there, saying, certain men are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, let us go and serve other gods, then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and behold, if it be truth, thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword."

Who, then, shall go to "inquire and ask diligently" concerning the truth of this appalling rumor? Each tribe sends a representative in the person of its most honored member; led by Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, whose zeal for the purity of God's church had once before stayed the plague which threatened Israel's destruction. One can picture the departure of the reverend group from the tabernacle at Shiloh; the anxious faces and throbbing hearts which watched the caravan's slow progress toward the Jordan, the suspense with which its return was awaited.

The distance from Shiloh to the lower ford of the Jordan is about thirty miles, so that not until the second day would their fears be confirmed by a sight of that sacrilegious altar. At last they behold it, gleaming in the sunlight, crowning an elevation which overlooks river and plain, its brazen plates reflecting the declining light, its four horns, like pointing fingers, lifted toward heaven, a great altar "to see to" from far away; an exact copy of the sacred altar at Shiloh. Hastily the tribes are summoned, and the thunder falls. "Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, what trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, but ye have builded you an altar that ye might rebel against the Lord?"

Still the charity that hopeth shines out through the tongue of fire: "If the land of your possession be unclean then pass ye over into the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth; but rebel not against the Lord, in building you an altar besides the altar of the Lord our God." He must have remembered that charitable thought with satisfaction when the two tribes and a half united to assure him and the ten princes of their unchanged faithfulness to the God of their fathers. Not to worship at it, not to offer sacrifice upon it was this altar built, but as a witness to the unity of the faith.

It stood there to say to coming generations: "Another altar, like me, but greater than I, because there God is present, unites you in one common brotherhood. I stand on the wilderness side; that is in Canaan. No sacred fire descends upon me, no broken hearted sinner kneels at my side, no sacrificial cloud hovers above me; but there the lamb is a perpetual offering, and the heart that sin hath broken, suffering love shall heal. I am but man's memorial; yonder is God's gift. I stand on a height man's hands have raised; that descends from the highest heaven. I remind you of the one altar of sacrifice for the thousands of Israel; let that remind you of the promised One who beareth the sins of the whole world."

The lessons for us in this record are not far to seek. God's one altar is now, as it was then, the altar of redemption. The holy sacrifice has been offered; "not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood Christ entered into the holy place." We can not mistake the spot, for as a cloud veiling the glory of God rested on the tabernacle, so over Calvery hangs a cloud, bright with angels, who have received the Ascending Sacrifice out of our sight. There, at the foot of the cross, is the only place to worship, the only gate to heaven.

We, who are building altars over in the wilderness, in the lands of our own possession, to works, or the law, or our sufferings for Christ, is there no one to entreat us not to *sacrifice* upon them, but only to keep them as witnesses that God is good and gracious unto all, and that his dear church is every where and eternally one?

PRESENT ASPECTS OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM.

BY J. H. KELLOGG.

THE convention system, which is so peculiarly American, has, with much wisdom, been largely adopted by the Sunday-school workers of the nation. In a cause where voluntary service is almost universal, the popular convention seems a necessity, as a means of exchange of ideas and arrangement of associated effort. The convention has proved, also, peculiarly valuable in its stimulating effect upon individual effort and enthusiasm. This feature of its influence was particularly noticeable in the earlier days of convention going. It was then not a novel thing to see a man go from his home in the lethargic condition common to the average routine teacher, and come back all ablaze with ardor and with sympathies aroused and views expanded to a range of well nigh universal charity. The earlier conventions notably affected the zeal of the individual. They were meetings of strong emotional power, in which the teacher's vocation as a heart work, a work of soul upon soul, and of divine grace upon human hearts, was very largely dwelt upon. Now-a-days we have much less of the teacher's experience in this line, much less of that which is especially exhortative and moving to the feelings and sympathies, and more of that which is purely intellectual or merely doctrinal. Both features are excellent, but it is a question whether our great convention ought not to go back, in part at least, to the ways of a dozen years or more ago, and provide, in their sessions, for a larger amount of that which is practical in experience and telling in illustration and enforcement of duty, and less for the modes and theories of teaching. The tendency is largely if not quite to exclude from the exercises that valuable element among our convention-goers which would contribute not so much to the instruction as to the spiritual life and zeal of the delegates. Since the era of the new lesson system especially, for which none can be more grateful, however, than myself, the tendency has been almost wholly to modes and methods of instruction. My impression is that very largely these should be the subjects of treatment in institutes or "assemblies" especially called and arranged for such purposes, and that the convention proper should be freer for the comparison of notes of personal experience, studying the wants of destitute sections of the field, and devising means for their supply, projecting plans for the establishment of local institutes and training classes, generally mapping out the necessary associated work and providing for it, and, further, for better personal acquaintance and fellowship.

It is a practical question whether the line between our institutes and conventions should not be quite closely drawn and maintained. Both are a necessity. Do we not need, first the normal class or training school in every church or community, then the local institute, with quarterly or monthly sessions, for every town, and, further, the county, district, and state conventions, for mass gatherings, or delegations, if the delegated method be preferred, who go to make the common exchange of experience, and fire each other's hearts with the electric currents of holy sympathy and zeal? One thing is certain, the conventions are not going to take the place and remove the need of the institutes and training classes. All are necessary. The danger seems to be that the convention now is losing as a great center of vitalizing force, as a galvanic battery, to stir to life and energy the state and nation. Plans and methods

of teaching can scarcely be more than hinted at in the half hour allotted to any speaker upon the convention platform. Conferences can be had, and brief, pointed remarks and suggestions thrown out, and these are excellent and profitable. But drill exercises are impracticable. Anything like systematic study and training is an impossibility. A dozen subjects of great reach and importance are started, only to be barely touched upon and left, and the delegate makes a page of notes, only to follow them with a dozen other pages merely in outline, and which, without drill and explanation and enforcement, are but a vague and shadowy statement of that which, developed in the institute and normal class, would be a practical system for efficient work.

The feature in our convention system now is essentially the intellectual one. In the march of progress in this direction, and too much can scarcely be said in its praise, the plainer elements of the old fashioned convention are left very considerably out of view. The social element is not sufficiently considered always. It is not certain but that a much larger share of time than is ever allowed might profitably be given to social intercourse, the making and culture of acquaintanceship. In Sunday-school life, as elsewhere, we are an overworked, overstuffed generation. The amenities of social life are not sufficiently cultivated. We do not get relaxation and play enough, along with our work. We do not make enough of a familiar acquaintance with each other's fields of work, and with each other's ways and peculiarities.

It is worth a thought whether our state conventions had not best be held biennially, and our international conventions quinquennially, making all statistical returns to correspond with the meetings of the latter, and then hold annually a large number of district institutes in the several states, which it might be, should be held for a week or two together (or a less time perhaps at first), after the fashion of the day-school teachers' institutes. These institutes could be made meetings of great practical value, and prove, in turn, the starting point for the organization of numerous strictly local institutes and training classes.

Our state conventions can afford, now, to devote less time to statistical work, and more to other essentially important matters. The status of the cause is now so generally familiar that a quinquennial census, carefully taken, should be sufficient for all purposes of general information. Our secretaries should be relieved from their annual burden of detailed statistical labor, and be afforded more time for the prosecution of the work of local organization, holding of institutes, etc. In a word, the managers of our conventions should be alive to the progressive demands of the cause, and meet them with enlarged and liberal preparation. The great questions of the day should be comprehensively treated by the best and ablest men, and the details of theories and modes of teaching left to assemblages called distinctively for such purposes. Our conventions should grapple with the great subject of thorough organization, in all its multiplied necessities, and should give their power to the moulding, vitalizing and swaying of the great mass of the Sunday-school fraternity. They should be gatherings of potential influence in all that constitutes wide general information and essential wisdom in the work, and they should be essemblages of vast and constantly accumulating social power. Particularly, the sweep of our international conventions should be world-wide in clearness of thought, in breadth of vision and comprehensiveness of plan. There is talent, and zeal, and sanctified energy enough on this continent, in the Sunday-school cause, to make our convention system influential beyond computation. True progress will lie in the direction of proper classification, and such plans and arrangements as will bring the whole fraternity of workers

directly under its inflence in the various channels and through the various means which have been indicated.

Our conventions ought to be allowed more time. Two or three days for the deliberations of a great body of active workers is an altogether insufficient period. The denominational assemblies consume weeks in a single session. It is common for local secular institutes to allot a couple of weeks to an annual meeting. Our great state and international conventions should be given a fortnight, and our county meetings at least three or four days. Within a few days I have heard some most earnest brethren bitterly complain of the brevity of our local conventions. They say we stop just as the interest in the meetings is at the boiling point, while we ought to go on and thoroughly treat the subjects under consideration. The cause in which we are engaged is one of the very first in religious importance. Its opportunities are constantly opening, and its burden of responsibility is being heavily augmented. Its supporters must take time, and thought, and means sufficient to answer the large demands which the unchristianized and uncultured world is making upon Sunday-schools.

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON X.—MARCH 7, 1875.—THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 20 : 1-9. Commit 1-6; Primary Verses, 2, 3.

1 The Lord spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Israel saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

3 That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem in mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah.

8 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

9 These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Ps. 46: 1.

TOPIC.—God has provided a Refuge.

HOME READINGS.

M.	Gen.	4 : 1-15	The First Murder Case.
T.	Ex.	21 : 12-36	The Law of Retaliation.
W.	Num.	35 : 6-34	Cities of Refuge Commanded
Th.	Deut.	19 : 1-21	The Command Repeated.
F.	Deut.	4 : 41-43	The Cities Selected.
	Josh.	20 : 1- 9	
S.	Matt.	5 : 38-48	The Law Superceded.
S.	Rom.	12 : 9-21	The Law of Love.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—For what purpose were certain places appointed as "cities of Refuge?" 2, 3. What is the meaning of "unawares" and "unwittingly"? Who was the first murderer? Gen. 4: 8. What was his punishment? Gen. 4: 11, 12. What effect did its announcement have on Cain? Gen. 4: 13, 14. What did God say should be the penalty for murder? Gen. 9: 5-7; Ex. 21: 12; Lev. 24: 17. How many witnesses were necessary to convict one of this crime? Num. 35: 30; Deut. 17: 6. Could a murderer buy off his punishment? Num. 35: 31. What did Christ say about slaying people? Matt. 26: 52.

2.—In those days, if one were killed, his nearest kinsman was bound to avenge him, and hence was called "The Avenger." There was no wise government to punish the willful murderer. The family that was injured immediately sought redress by trying to take life for life. You can see what the custom was by reading Ex. 21: 23-25. How differently Christ taught! See Matt. 5: 38-44. The Avenger was to kill no one but the criminal himself. Deut. 24: 16.

3.—But sometimes one might kill another without intending it, as in the instances supposed in Num. 35: 22, 23; Deut. 19: 4, 5. It would not be right for the Avenger to slay him for such an accidental killing. And yet, the next of kin, if he were a brother, would be apt to be so inflamed with the death of one so near to him, as to seek his revenge in spite of its being merely an accident. So God commanded that there should be cities of refuge to which those could flee who, unintentionally, had killed any body. Ex. 21: 13; Num. 35: 6, 11-15; Deut. 19: 1-3.

4.—These cities were to be in number, how many? Num. 35: 6. How many were on each side of the Jordan? Deut. 4: 41, 42. What were their names? 7, 8. See if you can find on the map where they were located. Had any of them been appointed before this time, and if so, where were they? Deut. 4: 41-43. Those cities belonged to the priests. Why did God select *them?*

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE LAW OF MURDER.—It is well to note the penalty in the first murder case. Gen. 4: 11, 12. The earth was forbidden to yield to this first murderer "her strength" when he tilled the ground, and he was to be "a fugitive and vagabond in the earth." In Cain's lament at the greatness of his punishment, he construes the latter part of his sentence as a commission to any one meeting him to kill him,—"and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me." His guilty conscience was the first to proclaim the law: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed." In this first instance of the taking away of human life it is also well to notice *the eloquence of blood.* "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." The voice of innocent blood, whether shed by the sinner or shed for him, has never failed to reach the ear of God, potent either to convict or to atone for him.

The first enunciation of the retaliatory law is in Gen. 9: 5-7. It will be seen that there God says that he will require human blood "at the hand of every beast" as well as "at the hand of man." In that passage is the general statement. The law is more specifically laid down in Ex. 21: 12-36. In this it is declared that an eye shall be given for an eye, "tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Here was the exactness of Law, not the forgiving spirit and forbearance of the Gospel. No murderer was to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. Num. 35: 30; Deut. 17: 6. No pecuniary satisfaction was to be taken for the blood that had been spilt. Num. 35: 31. No penalty was inflicted for slaying a thief caught in the act of breaking into a house at midnight. But he must not be killed after sunrise, for then, presumably, the lives of the inmates were not in danger. Ex. 22: 2, 3. If a man owned an ox that was in the habit of "pushing with his horns," and that fact was known to him, he himself had to suffer the penalty of death if the ox killed any one by reason of his not keeping him in. Ex. 21: 29.

Murder is intentional slaying. By the Mosaic law certain means and methods used in the accomplishment of the act were regarded as conclusive evidence of a premeditated purpose. As, for instance, if a man threw a stone, used a hand weapon of wood, or an instrument of

iron, or lay in wait for his victim. Intention was inferred from these circumstances. Num. 35: 16–20; Deut. 19: 11. Proof of enmity, also, was strong circumstantial evidence of purposed guilt. Num. 35: 21.

THE AVENGER.—In patriarchal times all injuries to the family necessarily had to be avenged by its members. There was no strong, overshadowing government to protect its subjects. Retaliation, swift and speedy, was regarded as absolutely necessary to self preservation. When one was killed it devolved upon his nearest kinsman as a sacred duty to avenge him. This obligation is found to be imperative among savage tribes even now. The Bedawin hold that it is binding on any within the fifth degree of blood to the slain, and that revenge may be had on any related within the same degree to the murderer. All the nations round about the Hebrews regarded the duty of avenging the murdered as a sacred legacy to his kinsman. So did the Germanic, Greek, and Slavic nations in their infancy. Some of them, however, as the Koran does now, permitted the relations to receive pecuniary satisfaction for the death of their kinsman whenever they could estimate their grief in gold and silver. The Mosaic law, as we have seen, held human blood too precious to be computed in money. While it did not entirely change the custom, it gave a new direction to thought, and prepared the way for better things. By it God was shown to be the real avenger. Gen. 9: 5; see, also, Ps. 9: 12; 2 Chr. 24: 22. The reason given why the blood of the murderer should mingle with the murdered is not that thereby human revengeful feelings may be satisfied, but because the slain was made "in the image of God." Gen. 9: 6. For this reason even the altar itself was no refuge for the willful slayer of his brother. Ex. 21: 14. For this reason it was declared that the land was defiled by the blood of the slain, and could not be cleansed "but by the blood of him that shed it." Num. 35: 33. Not only was there to be no pecuniary satisfaction taken in lieu of the life of the guilty one, but where one had accidentally killed another, his term in the city of refuge was not to be shortened by a bargain. Crime was not to be atoned for by money, nor was innocence to purchase its freedom. No retaliation was to be inflicted on any one save the offender himself. Deut. 24: 16—for an example of which, see 2 K. 14: 5, 6.

UNINTENTIONAL SLAYING.—The Mosaic law was the first to recognize that punishment should not be inflicted for unpremeditated slaying. Ex. 21: 13. Instances showing how want of intention might be inferred are given in Num. 35: 22, 23; Deut. 19: 4, 5. Its declaration that one should not lose his own life who accidentally only had taken the life of another is simply a specific carrying out of the general law laid down in Numbers 15: 27–31.

CITIES OF REFUGE COMMANDED.—The first intimation of such asylums is the promise to provide "a place" in Ex. 21: 13. All the particulars concerning them were afterward given in Num. 35: 6, 11–15. There were to be six—three on each side of the Jordan. "The way" to them was to be prepared so that the fugitive might the more easily reach the refuge. Deut. 19: 1–3. The number was to be increased as the growth of Israel required. Deut. 19: 7–10. The cities to be chosen were not to be any of the cities of the Israelites that might be convenient for the purpose, but were to be Levitical cities—cities belonging to the priests—so that one fleeing unto them was, as it were, fleeing unto the Lord. Num. 35: 6.

THE CITIES.—The three on the eastern side of the Jordan were appointed by Moses before the Israelites entered Canaan. Deut. 4: 41–43. These were Golan in the north, in the half-tribe of Manasseh; Ramoth Gilead in the center, in the tribe of Gad; and Bezer in the south in the tribe of Reuben. The exact locations of the first and last are not known, and little has been handed

down about them. On the western side of Jordan was Kedesh in the north, Shechem in the center, and Kirjath-Arba or Hebron in the south. On looking at a map it will be seen that there was scarcely any part of the land over a day's journey from one of these cities of refuge. In this is shown God's idea of a Refuge: It must be near at hand, and the way to it must be prepared for the fugitive. His idea of a Remedy, as manifested in the brazen serpent, is one at which men may merely look and live, and which shall be lifted up so that all may see it. And his idea of a Saviour is that he shall be both such a Refuge and such a Remedy!

REGULATIONS. — The fugitive must pause at the gate of the city, where, it would seem, there was a sort of informal trial before the elders of the city. Then, if not evidently guilty, he was assigned an abode. 4. He was not to be delivered up to the avenger, but a proper construction of Numbers 35:12, 24, 25 would seem to establish the fact that he was to be delivered up to "the congregation" of his own city to be tried and judged by them. Thus, practically, *the right of a trial by jury* was assured to any one who should flee to any one of these cities and enter the plea of Not Guilty. Without seeming to do so, this law struck at the root of all self-revenge, and permitted the next of kin only to be the executioner of the judgment of the congregation. If guilty, the criminal was to be delivered to him. Num. 35:19. If innocent, the accused was returned to his city of refuge, there to remain until the death of the high-priest. Num. 35:25. In this he was compelled to *abide*. If the avenger found him without the walls he was permitted to slay him. Num. 35:26. So, while seeming to sanction the custom of retaliation, and, indeed, permitting many things "on account of the hardness of their hearts," yet the Mosaic law, in the establishment of the cities of refuge, was the herald of the coming age of peace and its non-resisting, suffering King.

Winnowed Truths.

1.— It is not: "The soul that *killeth* shall surely die," but: "The soul that *sinneth* shall surely die." Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 5:12, 21; 6:23; Jas. 1:15.

2.—Think of the difference between the blood of Abel and the blood of Christ! Heb. 12:24; 9:13, 14; Rom. 5:18–21; Col. 1:19–22; Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:7.

3.—"Say not thou I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee." Prov. 20:22; 24:29; 25:21, 22; Matt. 5:38–48; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:59, 60; Rom. 12:14–21; 1 Cor. 4:11–13; Eph. 4:32; 1 Pet. 3:8, 9.

4.—No earthly cities, but God himself is our refuge. Deut. 33:27; Ps. 14:6; 46:1; 48:3; 59:16; 62:7, 8; 91:2, 3; Is. 25:4; Heb. 6; 18.

5.—In Christ we are safe from the avenger. John 10:28, 29; 17:12; 18:9; Rom. 16:25; Heb. 2:14, 15; 7:25; Jude 24.

6.—There is no safety, however, except we *abide* in him. John 15:4–8; 1 John 2:3–6, 24–28; 1 Cor. 12:15–17; Heb. 3; 14; Rev. 2:7; 3:21; 21:7.

HYMN.

Flee, as a bird, to yon mountain,
Thou who art weary of sin;
Go to the clear flowing fountain
Where you may wash and be clean;
Fly! for the avenger is near thee,
Call and the Saviour will hear thee;
He on his bosom will bear thee,
Thou who art weary of sin,
O thou who art weary of sin.

BLACKBOARD.

GOD HAS PROVIDED
A REFUGE.
How shall we Escape if
we NEGLECT so
GREAT SALVATION?
Heb. 2:3.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Talk with the class about the first murder until they are familiar with all the facts. Then ask them if they know what the punishment was. Is that the punishment that is now inflicted on those who commit murder? What is it? When you have succeeded in getting from them the fact that those who kill others are punished with death on the gallows, you can show that this is in accordance with God's law: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed."

2.—Before there were any police officers, sheriffs, constables, etc., to catch criminals, or courts to try them, men used themselves to punish them. If one was slain, his brother, or father, or cousin, or nephew, used to pursue the murderer and slay him in turn. But sometimes they would pursue and kill one who had killed some one without meaning to do so. Perhaps he had thrown a stone and accidentally hit some one, causing his death; or, in chopping wood, the axe slipped off the helve and struck one standing by so that he died. Ought one who had thus caused the death of another without intending it, to be put to death? God thought he ought not, and so he said that there should be certain cities to which such an one could flee, and there he should be safe. Draw on the blackboard a map of Palestine and point out the location of the cities, and show that they were so placed that any one could reach them in a day. No avenger dared go into one of them to slay any one.

3.—We are in danger. The punishment for our sins is sure to overtake us. That punishment will be—what? Eternal death—an endless misery—loss of heaven, loss of friends, loss of God! Is there any way to escape? Yes; God has provided a Refuge for us. That Refuge is Christ. In him we are safe. But we must go to him now. We must not put it off, or our punishment may come before we get to him.

HYMN.

Come to Jesus, come to Jesus,
Come to Jesus just now,
Just now come to Jesus,
Come to Jesus just now.

BLACKBOARD.

In SIN - In DANGER.

In CHRIST - In SAFETY.

LESSON XI.—MARCH 14, 1875.—THE ALTAR OF WITNESS.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 22: 21-27. Commit 21-27; Primary Verse, 24.

21 Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel,

22 The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day,)

23 That we have built us an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the Lord himself require it;

24 And if we have not rather done it for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel?

25 For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord.

26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice:

27 But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—GAL. 3:28.

TOPIC.—THE ONE LORD.

HOME READINGS.

M.	Num. 32: 1-42	Pledge of the Two-and-one-half Tribes.
T.	Deut. 12: 1-14	One Altar only for Sacrifice.
W.	Lev. 17: 1- 9	Penalty for Sacrificing Elsewhere.
Th.	Deut. 18: 1-18	Penalty for Serving other gods.
F.	Num. 25: 1-15	The Zeal of Phinehas.
S.	1 K. 18: 20-40	The Zeal of Elijah.
S.	John 2: 13-22; Matt. 21: 10-17; 23: 27.	Christ Purifying the Temple.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Carefully read the whole chapter and the Home Readings for this week. By so doing you will see that the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, now that the conquest of Canaan was complete, were permitted to return to their own homes on the east side of Jordan. Joshua commends them because they have kept that which was commanded them by Moses and himself. What commandments had Moses given them? Num. 32: 20-23, 29. What had Joshua? Josh. 1: 12-15. Best of all, they had kept the commandments of God. Could any praise be better than that?

2.—On their way home they built what? 10. Where was it built? 10, 11. What was its size? When the rest of the people heard of it what did they do? 12. Why did they want to make war upon them? 16-18. They supposed that this altar was built to make sacrifices upon. Would it have been wrong for them to have built an altar for that purpose? Deut. 12: 13, 14. What was the penalty for offering sacrifices anywhere except on the true altar? Lev. 17: 8, 9. What for serving other gods? Deut. 13: 12-17. Were the children of Israel, then, right in desiring to go to war against their brethren whom they supposed about to violate these commandments?

3.—Whom did they send to remonstrate about the building of the altar? 13, 14. Who was Phinehas? Ex. 6: 25. What had he before done that showed his zeal for God? Num. 25: 1-8. Did God acknowledge this service? Num. 25: 10-13. Was this promise of God fulfilled? Judg. 20: 28. What did Phinehas say to the tribes who had builded the altar? 16-20. In reading about the zeal of Phinehas, you have read about the sin of Peor. Do you remember about the sin of Achan, spoken of in Josh. 7?

4.—What did the tribes reply? 21-29. What were they afraid of? 24. Why? 25. What did they build the altar for? 27. Was it meant for a real altar? 28. Did they mean to rebel? 29. They did not mean to rebel, but they forgot to trust God. How did their reply strike Phinehas? 30. What did Phinehas then do? 32. Did it please the congregation as well? 33. What was the altar called? 34.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE RETURN.—The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had obtained from Moses their possessions on the east side of Jordan solely on condition that their fighting men should pass over the river with their brethren and assist them until they should "enter into rest." Num. 32: 1-42. Moses was startled at their proposition to locate on the east side, seeing in it only another such rebellion as took place at Kadesh-barnea. He thought the tribes meant to shirk—to escape the dangers before them and live at ease in the kingdoms already conquered, and so turn from following the Lord. He saw in their act another forty years of wandering and another judgment upon the adults of that generation. It was only upon their most solemn and reiterated pledge to endure with their brethren the burdens and the perils of the coming conflicts, that he permitted them to call the land they selected their own. But the fears of Moses were in no way fulfilled. When Joshua called upon them to go over with their armed men, their response was not only prompt, but affectingly devoted—"whosoever he be that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death." Josh. 1: 12-18. During the seven years of war they were faithful to their pledge, until now it was redeemed to the letter, each one

having "inherited every man his inheritance." Num. 32: 18. They stayed by not only until after the land was conquered, but until it was divided. That is evidenced by the fact that they departed out of Shiloh (9) where the tribes were assembled for the division. In bidding them return home, Joshua acknowledges their faithfulness to the commands both of Moses and himself, and, what is better, to the behests of God. 2, 3. His admonition to "take dilligent heed to do the commandment and the law" is no impugning of their faith or practice, but is a fatherly counsel to those who had much endeared themselves to him. Such cautions were often given by Moses. Deut. 4: 4; 6: 5; 10: 12; 11: 13. They returned home bearing with them the affection of their brethren and the blessing of their leader.

THE ALTAR.—When the tribes came into the region of the Jordan they built an altar "great to behold"—that is, an altar unusually large and conspicuous. From the tenth verse it would appear as if built within the borders of Canaan on the west side of the river, but in the eleventh it is spoken of as erected "over against the land of Canaan," and, therefore, we should say, was located on the east side close to the Jordan.

THE COUNCIL OF WAR.—It was a good testimony to their zeal that the news of this building brought all the rest of the tribes together at Shiloh with the purpose to make war upon those who not only were kinsmen, but had so lately laid them under such obligations in assisting them to subdue for themselves an inheritance. Not being possessed of any intimation of their real design in erecting this altar, they could come to no other conclusion than that it was built for sacrifice, and that was rebellion against Jehovah. For temporary use during their wilderness journeyings, the Israelites were permitted to build an altar where the length of their halting gave them occasion for its use. Ex. 20: 24. But under penalty of death they were to sacrifice only before the door of the tabernacle. Lev. 17: 1–9. They were to be educated into the idea that their God was "one Lord" so they must have only one altar and one place of sacrifice even as they already had, in the tabernacle, only one place of worship. This at once made them "a peculiar people" for the polytheistic worshipers round about "served their gods upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree." Deut. 12: 2. They were told that when they were "come into rest," the Lord their God would choose a place where they should offer their burnt offerings and their sacrifices. Deut 12: 1–14. The service of other gods or rebellion against Jehovah was to be punished without mercy. If the guilty one were brother, son, daughter, wife, or friend, still the command was, "thine eye shall not pity him, neither shalt thou spare him." Even cities were to be utterly destroyed with all that was in them if they went from following the Lord. Deut. 13: 1–18.

This generation in faithfulness and devotion was utterly unlike its predecessor that had perished in the wilderness on account of its rebellion at Kadesh-barnea. The judgment executed upon the fathers had not been in vain. The mighty wonders which God had wrought for them at the Jordan, at Jericho, and at Gibeon, together with the punishment of Achan's sin, had inspired them with a loyal reverance and godly fear. God's patient waiting for a generation that would serve him had been rewarded. Though those who had erected this altar, in apparent defiance of the reiterated commands of their God, were their own kinsmen, made specially dear to them by the additional brotherhood of camp and conflict, yet there was no hesitation exhibited when the occasion seemed to call them together to war against those who had but just now warred for them. Rather than lose the favor of God they were ready to pluck out the right eye and cut off the right hand. How different their temper from the people that even at the foot of Mt.

Sinai made and worshiped the golden calf!

THE EMBASSY.—It is the first impulse of human nature to strike. Wisdom generally comes only as "sober, second thought." So it was with the Israelites in this case. They assembled for war—they planned for peace. An embassy, with the priest Phinehas at its head, was sent to see what remonstrance would do. Phinehas was remarkably qualified to deal with recreant offenders. He was the son of Eleazar and of the daughter of Putiel, and grandson of Aaron. Ex. 6:25. He had shown his zeal for God in the punishment of the iniquity of Baal-peor, and by reason of it, had caused God to turn away his wrath from the children of Israel. Num. 25:1–11. God not only commended him therefor, but made with him a "covenant of peace," pledging to him an everlasting priesthood. Num. 25:12, 13. As he became high-priest (Judg. 20:28) this promise was redeemed, so far as he himself is concerned, and, in the eternal priesthood of Christ it was completely fulfilled.

Warlike in spirit (Num. 31:6), and full of denunciatory zeal, Phinehas hastens on his errand. Filled with the righteous indignation that swayed the soul of Elijah when he met the priests of Baal, and that moved the heart of Christ when he scourged the money-changers out of the temple, Phinehas purposes no half-way measures with these supposed recusants. In addressing them he assumes their guilt. He points to the terrible retribution that followed the sin of Baal-peor, the fearful character of which he was specially qualified to portray. From that iniquity, he asserts, "we are not cleansed to this day although there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord." He is led to think so because of the apparent sin of the two-and-one-half tribes. He cites them also to the sin of Achan, and brings out in special strong light the fact that they can not commit iniquity without the whole congregation suffering on account of it. But, withal, in the rugged nature of this stern priest there was a vein of tenderness, for he says: "Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be unclean (no altar in it), then pass over unto the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us," etc. His heart evidently yearned toward those who had for so long a time fought the good fight and kept the faith, and, now, for the first time were overtaken in a fault.

THEIR DEFENCE.—Now is shown the value of a good conscience. They solemnly asseverate that the altar was not built for sacrifice but for "a witness," so that the time might never come when those on the west side of the river should say to their children: "What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel?" Moses had erected an altar for a similar purpose (Ex. 17:15) after the defeat of Amalek, and they probably thoughtlessly supposed that they had a right to build one for a use they esteemed so innocent. Notice the strength and earnestness conveyed in the duplicated affirmation. 22. While our ordinary conversation is to be only yea, yea, and nay, nay (Matt. 5:34–37; Jas. 5:12) yet on extraordinary occasions solemn affirmations are allowable. John 3:5; 5:24, 25; 6:53; 13:16, 21; Luke 23:43; Rom. 1:9; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:18; 11:31.

They had, in some sort, an excuse for building this altar for the purpose they specified. Canaan was always spoken of as on the west side of Jordan. "The land of the possession of the Lord" (vr. 19) was there. Theirs was called "the country of Gilead." 9. The Jordan was the border between the two. To turn their backs upon Canaan wherein was the tabernacle and to cross the Jordan was to them like going where there was no God. Their right to worship at Shiloh, they had no doubt, would not be questioned by their brethren of their own generation. But would it be admitted by their descendants for their children? Best to make sure they think and so the altar was erected.

The motive of their building showed their appreciation of their privilege of worshiping Jehovah, but it likewise exhibited their want of faith in him. It was a monument of their distrust. They wanted to walk by sight and not by faith. They did not remember that their land was assured to them as "a possession before the Lord." Num. 32: 22. They did not realize, as they should have done, that if they served the Lord, that would be the best "altar of witness" —that then "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth nor any other creature" should be able to separate them from the love of God. What they built was not the Lord's altar—only a pattern of it. They seized hold of a shadow for protection. And, lastly, in a matter so entirely within his jurisdiction they should have consulted the high-priest, and not have run the risk of constructing an altar which *might* be used at some future time for sacrifice.

THE CONCLUSION.—The intensity of their reprobation of this supposed offence and the fear of its consequences can be measured by the joy with which the explanation was received. It rolled off from their hearts a heavy burden of dread of impending divine wrath and judgment. The incident shows how sensitive the Jewish people were at this time to all appearances of sin within their midst. They would tolerate no corruption in their congregation, and evidently believed in church "discipline"!

Winnowed Truths.

1.—As in old times there was one Lord, one tabernacle, and one place for sacrifice, so there is now only "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. 4: 5, 6. Our place of sacrifice is the hill of Calvary, our acceptable offering is the Lamb of God, and our altar is the cross. Acts. 4: 12; 10: 43; Rom. 3: 30; Heb. 2: 3; 5: 9; 9: 26; 10: 10, 12, 26, 27; 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.

2.—The value of a good conscience. Lev. 26: 17, 36; Job 11: 14–20; 15: 20, 21, Ps. 46: 1, 2; 53: 4, 5; Prov. 28: 1.

3.—"The Lord God he knoweth"—the comfort of every upright heart, the fear of every sinful one. 1 K. 8: 39; Job. 23: 10; Ps. 44: 21; 139: 1, 2; Jer. 12: 3; John 2: 24, 25; 21: 17; Heb. 4: 13; Rev. 2: 23.

4.—Let the church be zealous to purify itself. Those that bear the vessels of the Lord should have clean hands. Is. 52: 11; Matt. 18: 15–17; Rom. 16: 17; 1 Cor. 5: 11; 2 Cor. 6: 14–18; 2 Thess. 3: 6, 14; 1 Tim. 6: 5; 2 Tim. 3: 1–5; Heb. 7: 26; 2 John 10.

5.—The cross is our "Altar of Witness"—the divine assurance of our perpetual right to serve the Lord. Nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ. John 10: 27–29; 17: 12; 18: 9; Rom. 8: 35–39; Heb. 7: 25; Jude 24.

HYMN.

Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend,
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's dying friend.

Here it is I find my heaven,
While upon thy cross I gaze;
Love I much?—I'm much forgiven!
I'm a miracle of grace.

BLACKBOARD.

We bring our offerings now, not to the

DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE.

But to the

FOOT OF THE CROSS.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Narrate the fact, that, when the Israelites came to the border of their promised land, two tribes and a half wished to have their homes on the east side of Jordan. State the conditions on which they were allowed to have their wish.

2.—The seven years of war. The two and a half tribes faithful to their promise. The end of conflict—the division of the land—their right then to go home. Joshua commended them for keeping his and Moses' commandments, but, better still, for keeping God's commandments.

3.—On their journey home they built an altar. Why? An altar is to make sacrifices upon. If built for that purpose they did wrong. One God, etc. But this was not for sacrifices. This was built because they feared that after awhile those who lived close to the house of God, would say to their children, when they grew up, that they had no right to worship God. Wasn't it a foolish fear? Can anything or anybody separate us from God? (Read Rom. 8: 35-39.)

4.—The assembling of all Israel to make war upon them because of their supposed rebellion against God—the embassy—the conference—value of a good conscience—the explanation—the joy with which it was received. All this trouble because they *appeared* to be doing evil.

HYMN.

Aid, dear Lord, and help me be
Truly good—a child of thee.
Keep me safe from Satan's harms
Ever folded in thy arms.

Teach my lips thy praise to say
So I may speak right alway;
Tune my heart to sing thy song
So I may ne'er e'en *seem* wrong.

BLACKBOARD.

Abstain from all

APPEARANCE

OF EVIL.

1 *Thess.* 5: 22.

LESSON XII.—MARCH 21, 1875.—JOSHUA'S WARNING.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 23: 11-16. Commit 11, 14, 15; Primary Verse, 11.

11 Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.

12 Else, if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

13 Know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.

14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you.

16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him."—Heb. 10: 38.

TOPIC.—BE FAITHFUL.

HOME READINGS.

M. Heb. 3: 1-19.....Unfaithfulness Caused by Unbelief.
T. Heb. 10: 24-39.....The Peril of Unfaithfulness.
W. Heb. 12: 1-29.....Faithfulness Under Trial.
Th. Heb. 11: 1-40.....A Catalogue of Faithful Ones.
F. 1 Pet 4: 1-19.....A Faithful Exhortation.
S. Matt. 25: 14-30.....Faithful over Few Things.
S. Matt. 25: 31-46.....Reward of Faithfulness.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Read the whole of the 23d chapter and see how many times Joshua speaks of *himself*. What does he say of himself in the first verse? In the 4th? In the 14th? All that he claims is that he "divided" the land. Who does he say it was who conquered it? 3, 9. And yet Joshua had led the Israelites to battle. He was their general. Why, think you, did he say that the Lord drove out the nations? See Josh. 6: 20; 10: 11-13. Who gave Joshua strength and power to conquer the Canaanites? Did not Joshua do right in saying that the Lord had done all this? See 2 Cor. 10: 17.

2.—What does he say that God had done? What in verse 3? What in verse 9? What in verse 14? Not one thing had failed of all that God had promised. See ch. 21: 45. Was not that wonderful! He had forgotten nothing of all he had promised. He never does. He has made promises which are for *you*, if you will accept them, and they will never fail if you rely upon them. See Num. 23: 19. What does Joshua say that God will still do for the Israelites? 5, 10.

3.—What does Joshua tell them they must do? What in verse 6? (See if that was anything like what he himself had been commanded? Josh. 1: 6, 7.) What in verse 7? "Make mention" means "call upon;" just as we say "call upon the Lord." Had they ever been forbidden to do that before? Ex. 23: 13. What in verse 8? What does "cleaving" unto the Lord mean? What in verse 11? What is "the first and greatest commandment"? Matt. 22: 36-38. See also Deut. 10: 12. What in verse 12?

4.—If they turn from serving the Lord what does he say will happen to them? What in verse 13, if they intermarry with the wicked and idolatrous people of the land? Why did not God want them to marry with such people? Why does he not want *you* to associate with bad persons? Are they not "snares" and "traps" and "scourges" and "thorns in the eyes" to all good people? Why ought they to have served God? 14. What in verses 15 and 16 does he say will take place if they serve other gods? Shall we not also be lost if we do not serve God only?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE farewell discourse of Joshua was pronounced either at Timnath-serah, where his home was, (19: 50) or, and more probably, at Shiloh where such solemn convocations were wont to be held.

HIMSELF.—His farewell is peculiarly touching. His great services had laid all Israel under obligations to him. His bravery must have excited their admiration, his simple integrity gained their respect, his unselfishness won their love, and his devotion to Jehovah inspired them with the deepest reverence. Both in this and in the admonition given at Shechem (ch. 24), his speech is that of a father to his children, when he is about to depart and be at rest, rather than that of a ruler to his people. And in it all he has nothing to say of himself! Nothing to say of his services, nor of his leadership, nor of his victories. The Lord did it all. Joshua only "divided" the land. Could there be self-abnegation more utter than was exhibited by this man whose gray hairs were so crowned with honors? But his declaration was true. God had accomplished all that had been done. Joshua was the instrument only. If he remembered himself at all, which seems somewhat doubtful, he must have had the feeling expressed in Is. 10: 15. No wonder that God used him with such signal effect, for his surrender was complete — God was everything, he nothing. It was so with Paul. 2 Cor. 12: 9, 10.

WHAT GOD HATH WROUGHT.—That was a different matter. On that Joshua could be eloquent. *The Lord fought for you.* 3. Promised to do so: Deut. 1: 30; 3: 22; 20: 4. *Did* do so: Josh. 6: 20; 10: 11-13; 24: 12. *Hath driven out from before you nations great and strong.* 9. In fulfillment of promises recorded in Deut. 7: 1; 9: 1; 11: 23. *Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you.* See 21: 45; 1 K. 8: 56. And all the people acknowledged that this was so.

There was not a single grumbler to dispute the fact of the complete fulfillment of the covenant promises. And where can there a single one be found who has in faith relied upon the promises of God and then found that they failed him? Was it ever heard of that a faithful, aged Christian had other testimony to bear than this of Joshua's: "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord spoke concerning me"? Has there ever been a single one so dissatisfied with his own Christian experience that in departing this life he has felt constrained to caution his children from overmuch trust in the promises of Jehovah as revealed in the Scriptures? We know to the contrary. Our own experiences speak out in indignant denial. The most solemn testimonies of God's faithfulness through the helpful companionship of Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit and the most solemn adjurations to commit our all, unto him, have come from the lips of those who were about to depart and be at rest. Not one thing has failed them —not one thing shall fail us.

But God was not yet through with all his work for them. A part of his covenant with the Israelites was perpetual, based only on the condition: "If thou wilt serve Me." *He shall expel them.* 5. The remaining nations, or remnants of nations were not formidable enough to need the massed strength of all the Israelites, and yet were likely to prove troublesome unless divine assistance was rendered to each tribe in its attempts utterly to dispossess and drive them out. What God had done was proof that his pledge (Ex. 23: 23, 33; Num. 33: 53; Josh. 13: 16) would be as fully carried out in particulars as it had been in general. *One man of you shall chase a thousand.* 10. That in a manner had already been done. This asserts that the terrorism their very presence exercised over their enemies should continue. The promise is based upon Lev. 26: 6–8 the substance of which is repeated in Deut. 28: 7; and, in more general form, in Deut. 7: 24; 11: 25.

THEIR DUTIES.—A covenant must have two parties to it. Happy for us that God is willing to be one! But he is not to be the only one, and so Joshua seeks earnestly to impress upon his people that they also have obligations to perform. His first injunction is: *Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses.* How well Joshua remembered the command that at the beginning of the conquest had been given to him! Josh. 1: 7. Ever since, that command had been the key-note of his life. He had obeyed it thoroughly and found that it was not a mandate merely—but a promise as well. In enjoining its observance now, he was bearing testimony to its value. To them it came with all the force of his life behind it. Exhortations from Christians are effective just in proportion as their lives give weight to their doctrines. *Turn not aside.* Deut. 5: 32; 17: 20; 28: 14; Josh. 1: 7; Prov. 4: 27; Is. 30: 21. *Neither make mention,* etc. 7; Ex. 23: 13; Deut. 6: 13; 10: 20; Is. 48: 1. As Keil appositely remarks: "To make mention of the names of idols, to swear by them, to serve them (by sacrifices) and to bow down to them (in prayer) are the four outward forms of divine worship." *Cleave unto the Lord your God as ye have done unto this day.* 8. Not as each individual had done, for even then there were "none righteous, no not one," but the nation as a nation had kept faith with its God. *Love the Lord your God.* This is the first and greatest commandment. Matt. 22: 36–38; Deut. 6: 5; 10: 12; 11: 13. This is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13: 10. The fulfillment of all legal obligations toward God is nothing as compared with love to him. Matt. 19: 18–22; Mark 12: 41–44.

THE WARNING.—Commences with an If. Happily for them it concerned not what they had done, but what they were in danger of doing. Far better is it to shun the coming evil than to flee the coming wrath. *Marriages.* Had been

forbidden. Deut. 7: 3. Reason for the prohibition given in Deut. 7: 4. See also Ex. 34: 12–16. The thought is—the separation of God's people. God was exercising the husbandman's care who never puts good fruit into the same barrels with rotten fruit. Paul gives echo to the command. 2 Cor. 6: 14. *Shall be snares.* So Solomon found. 1 K. 11: 1–10. See also Deut. 7: 16; Ex. 23: 33. *Scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes.* See Num. 33: 55. Lasting partnerships of any kind between good and evil men can only result in the torture and destruction of the good. To visit those sick with loathsome disease as a physician is one thing. To live with them is to make a contract with Death. *Until ye perish.* Verses 14, 15, 16. Lev. 26: 14–33; Deut. 11: 16, 17; 28: 15–68; 29: 17–29 give the means wherewith they should be destroyed. These are the "evil things" threatened in verse 15. The interdictions against intermarriage with other peoples and against all covenants with them, the penalties attached to disobedience of such prohibitions, had but one object in view—to keep the Israelites from serving other gods. God's kindness, like that of a parent, is never more manifest than in his peremptory and menacing "shalt nots." The interpretation of all prohibitions and penalties is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Winnowed Truths.

1.—He sees things in their true light, who, whatever he may accomplish, gives God the honor. 1 Chr. 29: 11, 12; Is. 10: 15; Eph. 1: 11; 3: 20, 21; Phil. 2: 13; Col. 1: 29; Heb. 13: 21.

2.—The Lord it is that fights for *us.* Job. 33: 27, 28; Ps. 32: 7; 33: 18, 19; 56: 13; 143: 9; Dan. 3: 29; 6: 27; 2 Cor. 1: 9, 10; Heb. 2: 14, 15; 2 Pet. 2: 9.

3.—To those who have found the straight and narrow way it is specially dangerous to turn away, to the right hand or to the left. Num. 15: 30; Ps. 125: 5; Matt. 5: 13; 12: 31, 32; John 15: 6; Heb. 6: 4–6; 10: 26–39; 2 Pet. 2: 20, 21; 1 John 5: 16.

4.—The evil minded are as traps and snares to the unwary. Ps. 1: 1–6; Prov. 4: 14–17; 5: 3–12; Eccl. 7: 26; Jer. 5: 25, 26; 18: 22.

5.—Of all God's promises to us not one thing shall fail. Num. 23: 19; 1 Sam. 15: 29; Is. 55: 3; Mal. 3: 6; Rom. 11: 29; Tit. 1: 2; Heb 6: 17, 18; Jas. 1: 17.

6.—Nor is his wrath less sure than his mercy. Job 11: 20; Ps. 139; 7–12; Matt. 23: 33; Rom. 2: 3; 1 Thess. 5: 2, 3; Heb. 2: 3; 12: 25.

HYMN.

There is a death, whose pang
  Outlasts the fleeting breath:
Oh what eternal horrors hang
  Around "the second death!"

Lord God of truth and grace,
  Teach us that death to shun,
Lest we be banished from thy face
  And evermore undone.

Here would we end our quest:
  Alone are found in thee
The life of perfect love, the rest
  Of immortality.

BLACKBOARD.

TWO CERTAINTIES.

Sin when it is	**Be Faithful**
FINISHED	**UNTO DEATH**
Bringeth forth	**And I will give thee a**
DEATH.	**CROWN of LIFE**
—*Jas.* 1: 15.	—*Rev.* 2: 10.

DEATH OR LIFE—WHICH?

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—We have now to think of Joshua as an old man—stricken with age. He was forty years old when he went as a spy into Canaan to see what sort of land it was. He was eighty-five when the land was conquered, and he had given to him a home at Timnath-serah. (Show location.) He was one hundred and ten years old when he died. Not long before he died he asked all the people to come together that he might say to them some farewell words. What this venerable old man said is our lesson to-day.

2.—You remember that Joshua was the leader—the general-in-chief of all the armies of Israel, and that it was he that led them to battle? In his speech to the assembled people, he spoke about the conquering of the land and the driving out of the nations that had been in it. But who do you think he said it was that drove them out? Himself? No, not at all. He only said of himself that he "divided" the land for them. Who was it that divided the waters of Jordan so that the Israelites could go over? Who was it that threw down the walls of Jericho? Whom, then, do you think it was that Joshua meant? Don't you think that Joshua was right?

3.—Just as a father on his death-bed tells his children what to do, so Joshua told the Israelites what they must do. The first was, that they must be very courageous and keep and do all that was written in the book of the law of Moses. The only way to be good is to study the Bible and do what it commands. He told them not to worship any other gods—idols—and that they must love the Lord their God. That is just what God wants every man and every child to do. Listen to what he says in Matt. 22: 36–38. How anxious he is that we should love him! What makes him so? Because *he loves us*. That is what made Christ take little children in his arms and bless them. Joshua told them that they must not marry with the bad people in the land. He did not want them to do that for fear that they would become bad themselves. If you put a rotten apple into a barrel of good apples, what will happen? So bad company will make the best of boys and girls bad also.

4.—Lastly he told them that if they drew back from serving God that they should perish from off the good land that He had given them. Not one thing had failed to come to pass of all the good things which God had promised them, and now when he said this should happen, it would just as certainly be done. If they still served him, he would still serve them. If they rebelled against him, he would destroy them. So God, who wants to be kind to us, says to you. He will give you his aid all through life and make you happy, if you will let him, but if you refuse, punishment will as surely follow.

HYMN.

Hear, dear Lord, and from my heart
  Let thy mercy ne'er depart.
May thy Love my shelter be
  And thy Wrath ne'er visit me.

BLACKBOARD.

Which shall I have,
GOD'S LOVE
Or HIS WRATH?

LESSONS FOR FIRST QUARTER.

Jan.	3	Joshua Encouraged,....	Josh. 1: 1- 9	Feb.	21	Caleb's Inheritance,.....	Josh. 14: 6-15
"	10	Crossing the Jordan,....	Josh. 3: 14-17	"	28	The Land Divided,.....	Josh. 18: 1-10
"	17	Memorial Stones,.....	Josh. 4: 4- 9	March	7	The Cities of Refuge,...	Josh. 20: 1- 9
"	24	Preparation for Conquest	Josh. 5: 9-15	"	14	The Altar of Witness,...	Josh. 22: 21-27
"	31	Jericho Taken,.....	Josh. 6: 12-20	"	21	Joshua's Warning,.....	Josh. 23: 11-16
Feb.	7	Achan's Sin,.....	Josh. 7: 19-26	"	28	*Review.*—God's Mercies to Israel,.....	Josh. 24: 1-13
"	14	Ebal and Gerizim,.....	Josh. 8: 30-35				

LESSON XIII.—MARCH 28, 1875.—REVIEW.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua **24 : 1-18.** Commit **6-18**; Primary Verse **18.**

1 And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

4 And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them: and afterward I brought you out.

6 And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea.

7 And when they cried unto the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:

10 But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

11 And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

12 And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labor, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."—Ps. 107: 8

TOPIC.—THE POWER OF FAITH.

HOME READINGS.

M. Ex. 15 : 1-21.....The Song Review.
T. Deut. 8 : 1-20.....Review of Mercies.
W. Ps. 105 : 1-45.....
Th. Ps. 106; 107 : 1-16.....David's Review.
F. Neh. 9 : 7-25.....Nehemiah's Review.
S. Is. 63 : 1-19.....Isaiah's Review.
S. Heb. 11 : 8-38.....Paul's Review.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—At what place did the people assemble? 1. Shechem was between the two mountains that we studied about in Josh. 8: 30-35. Look that up, if you do not remember, and see what they were. Read verses 2-4 and see how many mercies you can find in them. The principal one is that he took Abraham away from association with idolatry. How many mercies can you find in verses 5-7? How many in verses 8-10? And how many in 11-13? Ask your teacher what is meant by the "hornet" mentioned in verse 12. What does Joshua think they ought to do on account of these mercies? 14. Did the people promise to do it? 16. Read verses 14-28. Has God given *you* any mercies? If so what ought *you* to do?

2.—What special promise did God make to Joshua? 1: 5. What command did he give him? 1: 6. What do you recollect about Joshua's history? Be prepared to tell your teacher all you know. What can you tell about Canaan? How many of the commands given to him will apply to us? 1: 6, 7, 8. Read Eph. 6: 10-18 and see if you can tell what God wants us to be. See if you can now repeat Josh. 3: 17. Can you tell what were the facts mentioned in that chapter? God's abiding place then was in the ark. Where is it now? The people crossed a swollen river on its dry bed. What become of our troubles when we trust God? Our next lesson was in Josh. 4: 4-9. What did it tell about? What were the stones for? 6. How

many heaps were there? 9, 20. If the Lord does not forget *us* what should we do in regard to him? Next lesson was in Josh. 5: 9–15. What was that about? What is said there about manna? Who was the "captain" mentioned? Those "on duty" meet their Lord.

3.—Now read Josh. 6: 12–20. How many times did they circle the city. What made the walls fall down? Heb. 11: 30. If we want to overcome, what, then, must we have? Read Josh. 7: 19–26. What did Achan hide? How was it discovered? What was done to Achan? Can any one conceal sin forever? Read Josh. 8: 30–35. What was it God set before his people? Which did he want them to take? How was the altar built? Next read Josh. 14: 6–15. What did Caleb claim? What right had he? His service and God's promise. Does the latter ever fail? Next read Josh. 18: 1–10. Into how many parts was the land divided? How were they distributed? Where is *our* inheritance?

4.—Next lesson was Josh. 20: 1–9. What were the "cities of refuge" for? Why were they so called? Who commanded that they should be appointed? Has God provided a refuge for us? Next is Josh. 22: 21–27. Who built the altar? What for? What effect did its building have? How did the misunderstanding end? The lesson shows the value of—what? Next is Josh. 23: 11–16. What does this lesson say about Joshua? What did Joshua say about himself? What about God? What about the people? What about what would happen if they did not serve God? Will that happen to us also, if we do not serve him?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

OUR main lesson is to be found in the review for the quarter. The ground covered in the review, as given by Joshua, is too extensive to be added to that for the three months passed. A glance at it, however, will be helpful as it will aid in showing the constancy of God to his people.

SHECHEM.—The place was fitly chosen. Up to that time no other place —not even Shiloh—could have for the Jews such sacred associations clustering around it as Shechem. Here Abraham first received his promise. Gen. 12: 6, 7. Here Jacob settled after his return from Mesopotamia (Gen. 33: 19), and here it was that he purified his house from idols, burying them under an oak. Gen. 35: 2, 4. As it was the place where Abraham had worshiped, where Jacob had sanctified his house, it would appeal with special force to the reverence of their descendants. There, too, had taken place the fearfully impressive solemnities of the blessings and the cursings. While Joshua spoke, the altar upon Mt. Ebal reinforced their memories of that awful occasion and rendered more weighty each word of his. No wonder that though the ark was not there, the host is spoken of as having "presented themselves before God," for each one must have felt himself to be in his very presence.

RECAPITULATED MERCIES. — Four periods are covered in Joshua's statement: 1st.—Call of Abraham to the sojourn in Egypt. 2–4. 2d.—The deliverance from Egypt. 5–7. 3d.—Conflicts on East Side of Jordan. 8–10. 4th.—Conquest of Canaan. 11–13.

The object of Joshua's address is to guard against any possible danger of idolatry. To do this he first reminds them that they sprung from an idolatrous family. "Even Terah, the father of Abraham, served other gods." God's dealings with them had been all of grace. They had not come to him, but he to them. Their fair tree, in its original stock, had borne idolatrous fruits. God had engrafted himself into it and so made it bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Hence they, as we, had no cause to boast. Whether Abraham himself was an idolator may well be questioned. The account of the call of Abraham as given in Gen. 12 would seem to indicate that he was not. The "gods" worshiped by Terah were probably *penatis*, such as Laban had in his house. Gen. 31: 19, 34. In recapitulating the subsequent mercies which Jehovah had shown to Israel, Joshua accomplishes the double purpose of showing the power of their God and his constancy to them—his omnipotency and the long continued manifestation of his omnipotence in their behalf. By reason of the constant exertion of his wonderful

REVIEW CHART.

	NO.	TITLES.	GOLDEN TEXTS.	SCRIPTURE.	TOPICS.	FACTS.	LESSONS.	
PREPARATION.	I.	Joshua En—	"Thou, therefore, my son" ——	"I will not fail thee nor" —— "Be strong and" ——	Be St——	Joshua's history—the promises—the commands.	We are to be soldiers—strong in the Lord—study his word.	CONSECRATION.
	II.	Crossing the ——	"When thou passest" ——	"And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm" ——	The Living ——	Priests bare the ark—waters rolled back—people pass over.	God's abiding place in us—sanctify ourselves — troubles vanish if we trust God.	
	III.	Memorial —	"I will remember the" ——	"That this may be a sign"—— "Then ye shall answer them" ——	When we remember ——	The stones in the river—the stones at Gilgal.	The Lord does not forget us—we should remember him.	
	IV.	Preparation for ——	"Looking unto"——	"And the Lord said unto Joshua" —— "And he said, Nay; but as"——	New Consecration ——	Circumcision — passover — manna ceased—Captain of the Lord's Host.	Often consecrate ourselves—those on duty meet their God.	
CONQUEST — DIVISION.	V.	Jericho ——	"By faith the walls" ——	"So the people shouted when the priests" ——	The Triumph of——	Once per day for six days—7 times seventh day — shouted — walls fell down.	No safety but in God—God works when we have faith.	VICTORY.
	VI.	Achan's —	"Take heed and" ——	"My son, give" —— "And Joshua said, why hast thou troubled" ——	Be sure your sin——	Babylonish garment — 200 shekels silver — wedge of gold — hid — God revealed—Achan punished.	Sin a "troubler and a curse"—wages of sin is death.	
	VII.	Ebal and —	"I have set before you"——	"And he wrote there" —— "And afterward he read" ——	The Great ——	The altar of unhewn stones — the blessings and cursings.	*Must* choose—therefore choose Life.	
	VIII.	Caleb's ——	"If any man serve me"——	"Now therefore give me this mountain" ——	God the ——	Caleb's service — his demand — his reward.	God's promises sure—who honors God will himself be honored.	
	IX.	The Land ——	"The lines are fallen"——	"And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack ——	God's promise ——	Israel divided into seven parts—lots cast.	God chooses our portion here—the kingdom of God is ours.	
MEMORIALS.	X.	The Cities of ——	"God is our"——	"Speak to the children of Israel, saying," ——	God has provided a ——	Cities of refuge appointed.	God our refuge—"How shall we escape if we neglect," etc.	PEACE.
	XI.	The Altar of ——	"Ye are all one" —	"Therefore we said, Let us now prepare"——	The one ——	Two and one-half tribes build an altar—rest prepare for war—explanation.	One Lord, one faith, one baptism—value of a good conscience.	
	XII.	Joshua's ——	"If any man draw" ——	"Take good heed therefore" ——	Be Faithful.	Joshua old—assembles the people—farewell address.	Give God the honor—turn neither to the right hand or to the left.	

"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness," etc.

power for them they were even then occupying a land for which they did not labor,* were dwelling in cities which they did not build, and were eating of the fruits of vineyards which they did not plant. He redeemed them from Egypt and brought them into the promised land even as he "hath raised *us* up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And we, as well as they, can say: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast." Wherefore let us take to heart the exhortation of Joshua: "Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and truth."

REVIEW EXERCISE.

I.—Preparation.

Scripture.—Ex. 15: 1–21.

Hymn.—All hail the power of Jesus' name.

TITLES.—What lesson shows that God likes to be remembered? III. What one tells of people passing through a river without getting wet? II. What one shows the necessity of consecration before entering on a campaign? IV. What one tells us how to increase our courage? I.

TEXTS.—What is the text that directs the eye of every Christian soldier to the Saviour? IV. What is the one that assures us that we have no need to fear the river of Death? II. What one is meant to recall God's mighty miracles? III. What one is meant for those who are weak? I.

TOPICS.—What topic requires strength from us? I. What one shows that the more we give ourselves to God the more we get from him? IV. What one encourages us to come to him? III. What one shows us that God is not made of stone or wood? II.

FACTS.—Where was Joshua born? 1.—With whom was his first battle? How old was he when he became Moses' successor? What was the meaning of his name? (*God's salvation.*) What was the length of Canaan? What was the width? What sort of a country? What was the climate? 2.—What were the people required to do before they crossed the Jordan? How were they enabled to cross? Who stood still in the middle of the river-bed? 3.—What did Joshua heap up in the river-bed? What similar thing did the people do at Gilgal? What were they for? 4.—What feast did the people keep? What became of the manna? What did they eat instead? What strange person did Joshua see?

LESSONS.—1.—What injunction in the first lesson shows that we are part of an army? In whom must we be strong? What does God expect us to study? 2.—What now instead of the ark is God's abiding place? What becomes of troubles when we rely on God to overcome them? 3.—What two things did the memorial stones show in relation to our memory and God's memory? What does the frequent purification of the Jews show that we should do? In doing what shall we be likely to meet our captain of the Lord's host?

II.—Conquest and Division.

Scripture.—Heb. 11: 8–33.

Hymn.—My faith looks up to thee.

TITLES.—What lesson tells about two mountains? VII. What one tells of a man's receiving an estate which God had promised to him long before? VIII. What one tells of a man who thought too much of a garment and some silver and gold? VI. What one tells of a city captured by the blowing of trumpets? V. What one tells how each tribe obtained its share of the land? IX.

TEXTS.—What text shows that it pays to serve God? VIII. What one warns us against wishing for things that do not

*The thirteenth verse is a fitting climax to all the preceding part of the chapter, and the first part of it very naturally follows the relation in the twelfth verse. Just what is meant by the "hornet" is matter of speculation. It was promised in Ex. 23: 28 and Deut. 7: 20. As bees, however, are used, with reference to the terror they inspire, to personate a host of angry enemies (Deut. 1: 44; Ps. 118: 12) so, very likely, "hornets" stand in the place of the fear which a host of hornets would excite, and the twelfth verse and its prophetic precursors are probably to be construed by the light of Deut. 2: 25; Josh. 2: 11.

belong to us? VII. What one expresses satisfaction with our lot? IX. What one gives us opportunity to make the greatest choice of our lives? VII. What one gives the real reason why the great walls of Jericho fell down? V.

TOPICS.—What topic shows how vain it is to hide stolen goods under a tent? VI. What one speaks of a priceless opportunity? VII. What one tells of a victory without a battle? V. What one shows that God remembers what we do for him? VIII. What one proves that God is faithful? IX.

FACTS.—1.—How many times did the Israelites circle the city of Jericho? How many times on the seventh day? What caused the walls to fall? 2.—What did Achan steal? How was he discovered? How punished? 3.—What was the altar at Mt. Ebal made of? What were there pronounced? 4.—What inheritance was given unto Caleb? How had he earned it! 5.—Into how many parts was Canaan divided? How did each tribe receive its share?

LESSONS.—What lesson teaches that there is no safety in walls? What one shows the power of faith? 2.—What did Achan's theft prove sin to be? What are the wages of sin? 3.—What lesson proves that God wants us all to be Christians? 4.—What one shows that he redeems his pledge? Who is honored of God? 5.—Who chooses our lot here? What lesson shows it? What is our kingdom?

III.—Memorials.

Scripture.—Ps. 107: 1–16.

Hymn.—He Leadeth Me.

TITLES.—What lesson tells of an unnecessary altar? XI. What one of a place of escape for the manslayer? X. What one gives the parting admonition of a faithful servant of God? XII.

TEXT.—What text shows that there is hope for even the very worst people? X. What one shows the danger of turning away from serving the Lord? XII. What one shows that we are all brothers and sisters? XI.

FACTS.—What were the cities of refuge appointed for? If the manslayer got within one of these cities could anybody harm him? 2.—When the two-and-a-half tribes were going home what did they build? Why did they build it? What effect did its building have on their brethren? How was it explained? 3.—When Joshua became old what did he do? What did he tell the people? Did he speak much about himself? Who then? What did he tell them to do?

HYMN.

Lord, I hear of showers of blessings,
Thou art scattering full and free;
Showers the thirsty land refreshing,
Let some droppings fall on me.

Pass me not, O God, my Father,
Sinful though my heart may be;
Thou mightst leave me, but the rather
Let thy mercy fall on me.

Pass me not, thy lost one bringing;
Bind my heart, O Lord, to thee;
Whilst the streams of life are springing,
Blessing others, oh, bless me.

BLACKBOARD.

The Lord is a
MIGHTY HELPER.
Is He
HELPING ME?
Gives
GREAT BLESSINGS.
Is He
BLESSING ME?

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—First tell the little ones how God took Abraham away from a family which worshiped idols, so that he could have a nation that should worship only Himself. How he showed him the land of Canaan, and promised that it should belong to his children. How they went down into Egypt—how oppressed they were—how God brought them up out of it—led them through the wilderness for forty years, bringing them finally to the river Jordan, the border of the land he had promised them.

2.—Then question them to ascertain how much they know about the lessons of the quarter. Who was Joshua? What did God say he would do for him? "I will never," etc. What will he do for us? Could the Israelites cross the Jordan when they came to it? How did they get over? Will God help us over our difficulties if we ask him? What did Joshua build in the river-bed? What did he do it for? What was the heap of stone at Gilgal for? What should we do to show that we remember God's goodness to us? What sort of a feast was that the Israelites celebrated at Gilgal? What feast have you seen in the church? Was this anything like that? What became of the manna? Who was the captain that Joshua saw?

3.—How did the Jews take Jericho? Who helped them? What made the walls fall down? What did Achan do? What was it he stole? Where did he hide it? How was it discovered? What was done to Achan? Can we hide sin from God? Will he punish us for sin? At Ebal and Gerizim God pronounced the blessings and the cursings. Who were the blessings for? Who were the cursings for? Which did God want them to take? When Caleb went as a spy, what report did he bring back? Did the others bring back the same report? What was he promised for acting so bravely for God? Did he get it? When the people conquered the land, what did they do with it?

4.—When a man killed another accidentally, how did God provide that he might himself escape from being killed? When we sin and deserve punishment, has he provided a refuge for us? What? When the two-and-one-half tribes went home, what did they build? What for? Did it make any trouble? Ought they to have built it? When Joshua became old what did he have the people do? What did he tell them about God? What did he command them to do? Ought we also to love God?

HYMN.

Jesus loves me! this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong,
They are weak, but he is strong.

Jesus loves me! he who died,
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let his little child come in.

BLACKBOARD.

GOD HELPS,

GOD BLESSES.

GOD LOVES.

Therefore

I WILL | SERVE LOVE | HIM.

EDITORIAL.

AN UNSTUDIED BIBLE.

BECAUSE of the fact that the Bible among our adults is comparatively an unstudied book, we ventured, last spring, to write an editorial commending a Bible-school in the afternoon, instead of a second preaching service, as "The Next Step Higher." That editorial, widely copied as it was, had an effect greater than we dared to hope. We return to the topic again, firstly, because of its importance, and, secondly, because the subject has been so cogently set forth in a little pamphlet, by Rev. Henry M. Parsons, of Boston. The contents of the pamphlet were delivered as an address before the Connecticut State Sunday School Convention held at Meriden, in May last. Inasmuch as we have not room for the entire address, we propose to epitomize his arguments as an aggressive re-inforcement to what we ourselves have said.

Those who know Mr. Parsons at all know that he is entitled to speak as an authority on this matter. From 1854 to 1858, when settled at Springfield, Mass., he labored to introduce a Bible service, and succeeded in doing so in the latter year. It was attended with the very best results from the beginning. With some opposition at first and some changes, in 1864 it became a permanency on his present plan of conducting it, and endures there still under his successor. Under the old plan of carrying on the Sabbath-school there were about one hundred and sixty members, of whom about forty were adults. Under the new, the service averaged an attendance of three hundred punctually present through a specially inclement winter. Instead of a school marked by indifference, where the teachers found a quarter of an hour ample time to unload themselves, and yawned prodigiously for the remainder of the session, pains-taking preparation became evident, the presence of God was made manifest, and no month passed without conversions. The prayer-meetings of the church showed such inward revelations as only come from a study of the word of God, instead of those cut and dried experiences, carefully preserved like some good housewives' herbs, on account of the healing juices they were known once to have possessed. The thought and theme of young and old was the last Scripture lesson, or the next one, and a personal interest in the effect of them upon other hearts was plainly observable. In 1870 Mr. Parsons removed to Boston and established the same service there, and has made it even more famous there than he did at Springfield.

So much for his connection with the history of Bible services. It will be seen from this that his "arguments" have, in his case, really become statements of fact, and so are of triple value.

I.—His first position is that, in order to secure the study of the Bible, the Sabbath school must be raised to a more commanding and important rank among church services. It should be regarded as a place, not for the children only, but also for the church and congregation. Ministers who think the Sabbath-school a good institution, but who do not themselves work in it because they have a throne from which to address and teach the people, should be the leaders of, and teachers in this service. All the members of the church should be enlisted, and sufficient time should be given to it so that it should become a meeting of worship as well as of study. Inasmuch as the experiences of others confirm that of Mr. Parsons, we are warranted in saying that ministers generally will find

that their "throne" will never be securely established until it is moved into the Sunday-school. They must secure the allegiance of the children or else they will be without the fealty of the next generation of adults.

II.—"Our Christian congregations to-day," he says, "know as little in many cases, about vital truths of the Bible, about its history and leading facts as the heathen." As we have stated and shown, Mr. Parsons is in a position to know whereof he affirms. He has been on terms of intimacy with the ignorance of his congregations, instead of being, like most clergymen, at long range with it; has taught them, instead of merely preaching at them. One might as well try to dispel darkness with a rush light as to overcome this ignorance merely by pulpit homilies. Patient study only will do it, and that will never come about of itself. The ministers must become teachers, and then their congregations will soon be walking in the noonday of gospel light, instead of merely watching a torch waving at them from the pulpit while they themselves sit in great darkness.

III.—"We need this service to qualify the people to be intelligent hearers of preaching." That is very true, and at the same time it might come to pass that there would be less desire for preaching that is simply oratorically and rhetorically fine. The pews, too, might not be quite so well satisfied with mere moral essays and goodish platitudes, and would see how much in a sermon was philosophy and how much was gospel. Our friend will see that intelligence has its dangers.

IV.—It is the way for the pastor to learn "the current religious thought of the people." The pulpit alone is too far removed for such close inspection. In the cross-examinations that take place in a class, hearts are laid bare, whose pulsations of doubt and fear would never otherwise be suspected. The class is the place for such revelations, because the members of it come to it for the healing of their diseases of whatsoever sort they may be.

V.—"It becomes fruitful in furnishing the church members with Christian thoughts, themes, and models from the Bible." Their experiences are fresh: their ideas do not come at second-hand: they are independent, self-helpful, have a feeling of property in their own ideas, and walk by the light of the Word, instead of the pulpit or their religious newspaper.

VI.—"It enlarges the pastor's field of influence, power, and usefulness." In other words, he is the commander who drills, fights, eats, sleeps, and bivouacs with his men, instead of only seeing them on parade, after mounting his best charger and putting on his best uniform.

VII.—"It develops the talents and gifts of the church, thereby increasing the number of church laborers." Mr. Moody says that the general idea of the church is that of a hospital where one can go in and be nursed and coddled. The number of those whose conscience-obligations make them attend church, Sabbath-school, and prayer-meeting and engage in the work of the church outside is astonishingly small, as any one can see by a week's observation. The hive is wrongly constituted somehow, for the drones outnumber the workers. And yet Christianity lays its commands to work authoritatively on all its followers. Laziness and it mix no better than oil and water. How, then, is this inaction to be remedied? The answer is plain enough. Let the Word of God quicken the dead conscience to a new life. No other way has ever been found.

VIII.—"But this service," he says, "is demanded especially by the increasing assaults of infidelity upon the Sabbath, the church, and the *Bible*. Something must be done soon. The enemy is coming in upon the churches themselves, as a tide. It will not do to stay behind the fortifications of the Reformation, and say, "these be our defences." Men do not want argument now—they want

life! The education of the day in its underlying philosophy is largely Pagan, and the only remedy is the philosophy of the Bible, communicated by the Holy Ghost to the mind and heart, through faith in Jesus Christ! We are driven even again to find the charter of our freedom, in Christ—and to defend it by the sword of the Spirit! Hence the need of beginning throughout the rank and file of the sacramental host, this sword-practice! Not a formal, or intellectual, or professional holding of truths will do this. But the personal and heart reception by *faith* of Jesus, the living Word through the written Word—alone will fit us to cope with the foes now arising against the kingdom of God—and in his name, to be victorious over them."

Editorial Miscellany

It is announced that the site of the ancient Levitical city of Gezer has been identified by M. Claremont-Ganneau. Lately he discovered, near the modern *Abu-Shusheh*, two identical bitingual inscriptions in Greek and Hebrew, the translation of which is: "The limit of Gezer." Two other similar inscriptions have been found; one northwest and the other southwest of the one mentioned, so that we now have the angle of the square that formerly was the boundary of the city. Now if the identification be complete, we seem to be on the verge of an interesting discovery in regard to the exact length of the cubit. In the lessons for February, it will be remembered, that the length of each side of the square surrounding the Levitical cities (Num. 35: 5) was two thousand cubits. It remains, therefore, only to be absolutely sure of the identity of the place and of the limits, forever to settle this vexed question. Concerning the first we may esteem ourselves to be reasonably secure from the fact that M. Ganneau was able before these discoveries to connect *Abu-Shusheh* on topographical grounds with the *Tell-el-Gezer* mentioned by the historian Mejr-ed-Deen. The other seems only to be a matter of time, patience, and careful exploration.

Last year the Methodist Bishops in their Pastoral Address expressed the conviction concerning the International Lessons, that, "Important as they are, yet there is a liability that the time and attention of the school may be too much given to the study of these lessons." This year their utterance is not much more satisfactory. They regard the Sunday-school as "a most important agency for the moral and religious education of the young," *yet* they deem it advisable to call attention to that paragraph in the Discipline which enjoins the use of Catechisms in Sunday-schools and families, and the instruction of the children in the doctrines of the church. That "yet" takes away all the force of the commendation. We shall begin to think that Methodist Bishops merely regard themselves as brakes upon the wheels of Sunday-school progress, instead of the leaders that pull them forward.

In the matter of carrying the preparation of the lessons too far, Gen. Clinton B. Fisk is a conspicuous and frightful example. He studies his lessons in leisure moments wherever he happens to be. On a street car not long ago, so intent was he in getting at the next Sabbath's lesson, that he utterly forgot to pay his fare. The driver at first mildly rang the bell that reminds delinquent passengers to walk up and settle, without in the least disturbing our friend. Then he began to ring it in a way that showed he was exasperated,

and what he thought of men who tried to steal a five-cent ride. This finally caused another passenger to nudge the oblivious man, and say that the bell was meant for him. Of course he immediately walked forward and deposited his ticket in the proper receptacle, and then went back to his study. The driver was observed to look at it through the glass window, first approvingly, then doubtfully, and then with an air of intense dissatisfaction. Slowly he wound up the car, took one more good look, then opened the door and called out: "*Say, Mister, that ain't no ticket on this road!*" Walking forward again, the general peered through the glass and read quite distinctly: "*By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down; yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.*" The driver was an ignorant man, but he wasn't to be thus imposed upon even with Scripture.

We congratulate Dr. Vincent on the first number of his *Normal Class.* In the first place it is tastily gotten up—and that is one grand desideratum. In the second place the contributions are good—and that is another. In the third, the editorial departments are juicy, fresh, interesting, and instructive—and that is still another. In the fourth, it realizes its conception—and that is best of all. We hope that it has a large future before it, and that Sunday-school men will soon see its real value. But Vincent must not make such atrocious puns on the names of Sunday-school editors as he has done in the last part of this new periodical. For one we enter our indignant protest, and hereby announce our intention to pursue him for pun-itive damages.

Those widely known makers of scales, the Messrs. Fairbanks, in addition to dealing with conscientious liberality with their numerous employees, take especial care that their children shall not want for the best of secular or religious instruction. They have not only aided in establishing good public schools, but about twenty years ago founded an academy, taking care that the tuition was put at minimum rates, and that a full corps of competent, liberally paid teachers should be secured. They have freely aided also in the building of several churches in the village. In the churches of their own denomination, the pews rent at very low prices, they preferring to be assessed for the balance necessary to meet current expenses, rather than have any one feel that he is not able to possess a sitting. Of course Sunday-schools receive from them special encouragement. It might be a piece of wise political economy for other manufacturers to follow their example—for they have never been troubled with even a threat of a strike.

The contrast between Mr. Moody as he now is and Mr. Moody as we first knew him is simply amazing. Those who have known him from his earliest beginnings as an evangelist find it next to impossible to realize the change that has taken place in him even though their memory shows a faithful portrait of his former self not the least dimmed by time. Those whose acquaintance with him is but recent can hardly conceive of the difficulties and apparent limitations through which Mr. Moody has struggled up to his present wonderful power. The following reminiscence of the man given by Mr. Reynolds at the late convention in Canada well illustrates what we have said, and is, besides, an interesting bit of history:

> The first meeting I ever saw him at was in a little old shanty that had been abandoned by a saloon-keeper. Mr. Moody had got the place to hold a meeting in at night. I went there a little late, and the first thing I saw was a man standing up, with a few tallow candles around him, holding a negro boy and trying to read to him the story of the Prodigal Son, and a great many of the words he could not make out, and had to skip. I thought, if the Lord can ever use such an instrument as that for his honor and glory, it will astonish me. After that meeting was over Mr. Moody said to me, "Reynolds, I have got only one talent; I have no education, but I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and I want to do something for him, and I want you to pray for me." I have never ceased from that day

to this, morning and night, to pray for that devoted Christian soldier. I have watched him since then have had counsel with him and know him thoroughly; and, for consistent walk and conversation, I have never met a man to equal him. It astounds me to-day when I look back and see what Mr. Moody was thirteen years ago, and then what he is under God to-day, shaking Scotland to its very center and reaching now over to Ireland. The last time I heard from him his injunction was: "Pray for me every day; pray now that God will keep me humble."

THE paragraphs below, which we clip from the *Interior*, ought to be sent to every man whose business is so absorbing all his time and energies as to leave him bankrupt in ability to bestow any attention upon his children. Incidentally it shows how necessary are the ministrations of the Sunday-school even to the children of what are called "the upper classes." Indeed the two sorts of children that most need them are those of the slums and the alleys and those of the marble fronts on the princely avenues. And in many cases, as a multitude of Sunday-school teachers will testify, the little heathen from the latter are less manageable and less hopeful every way than their shabby, unkempt kindred of the Five Points:

As for our modern Abraham commanding their children after them, it amounts principally to their commanding them not to bother them when reading the morning paper, or not to make a noise when taking a Sunday nap. Fathers now-a-days take an interest in family government mainly to the extent of seeing that the family lets them alone; and the grand problem before the paternal mind is, how a man with six children can be as free from domestic care as the jolly old bachelor over the way. When a man takes breakfast before the children are awake, and comes home to dinner after they are asleep, it can hardly be said in jest that on Sunday morning he needs an introduction to his interesting family.

And what are the practical effects of all this? The father loses all hold on the growing boys and girls. He lets them alone until they let him alone. He knows little of their studies, their progress, their behavior. He does not call forth their affection and trust. Strand by strand the cord of filial interest is broken. They respect him because that, among others, is one of the lessons the mother inculcates. But those children and that father are walking on opposite sides of that stream that widens day by day. They regard him as they would some highly respectable boarder, or as a clerk of the ordnance or head of the commissary department,—a kind of necessary appendage to the house, a kind of police regulation to scare burglars at night, a kind of commercial regulation to keep the grocery wagon coming to the door, and a kind of Sunday luxury nearly on the level of the extra Sunday dinner, but as for fatherhood or sonship, as for the deeper communion of daily life or soul-bonds that ever should strengthen between a father and his sons and daughters till white hairs adorn the father's brow, what is he to them, or they to him?

Ask the father, who at fifty looks up from his desk and out upon the street to a worthless image of himself, who bears his name but disgraces his house, ask him, as he follows the mother's remains to a premature grave, borne down to it by burdens that never should have been piled upon her head and heart, whether money or fame can atone for the bitterness of the heart when the nest is broken, the birdlings scattered, and no love-call left that can win them back?

WE are not among those over-sensitive people who can relish a joke only when it is not at their expense. We don't believe that we have enjoyed one more than this which the *Evangelical Repository and United Presbyterian Worker* sends fizzing into our fortification:

"Joshua belongs to the *theocratico-historical* books of the Bible." So says THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER in the first sentence of its Notes and Comments on Joshua for teachers and scholars. Just think of that,—a teacher sitting down before his class of boys or girls, and saying, "We enter this morning upon the study of another book of the Bible,—the book of Joshua! I will tell you first something about this book: it belongs to the *theocratico-historical* books of the Bible. Boys, what did I say the book of Joshua belongs to? You don't remember? Why, I have just told you. Well, I will tell you again: 'the *theocratico-historical*.' What does that mean, boys? You don't know?" We do hope that the NATIONAL did not go into the hands of a teacher who was silly enough to talk to a class in such language. It does not often take such spells as that, and we hope it will soon get entirely well in this respect. Plainness of speech, brethren.

Can not the *Repository* make allowance for such philological weakness—such an innocent display of learning? As Mark Twain would say, *theocratico-historical* is "no slouch of an expression." We were rather proud of it. We did what the *Repository* does not give us credit for—we explained those enigmatical words. We are glad it has come up again, because it brings back the pleasure we had in first putting it on paper. But last of

all did we expect to be criticised for it by the *Repository*, whose very name is such an immense philological achievement that we have dared only once to give it in full.

THAT most learned man, the Rev. Levi Philetus Dobbs, D. D., whose profound observations while traveling in Antipode, have formed such an attractive feature of the *National Baptist*, has lately visited a Sunday-school in that Arcadian region which is, to say the least, remarkable. The quietness of the proceedings in it was what specially attracted his attention. When the clock marked the hour the pupils fell into their places without call or signal. The superintendent placed upon the blackboard the number of a hymn, and, without other announcement, it was immediately sung. All the exercises were conducted from the platform in this silent way. The Rev. Levi Philetus Dobbs, D. D., who at home was accustomed to talking superintendents, was puzzled, as well he might be. Right after the school he sought an interview with this man who carried on a school without saying a word. He commenced a voluble expression of his pleasure which was cut short when his (supposed) auditor drew forth a slate and wrote on it: "*I am a deaf mute*"!

It was a school, so it was explained to him, that had been talked to death by former superintendents. The session had been prolonged beyond all reason; scholars were tired to death with speeches; and scanty time only was left for the lesson. The school came to the conclusion that the great work of the superintendent was to keep still. As every one who could talk would talk, application was finally made to a Deaf and Dumb Asylum for a man who could *not* talk. And the result was *so* satisfactory!

The revelation of Dr. Dobbs has created a sensation. We understand that already schools are forwarding orders to the different asylums for deaf mutes of approved piety and decorous appearance. "Send us," they say, "a deaf and dumb superintendent at once—expense no object."

WHILE our learned friend is in Antipode, we suggest that he look around and see whether there are any churches there who think that the Sunday-school is of enough importance to see that they are properly officered, have teachers that are qualified for their work, and promptly provide for its expenses out of their own treasuries. We are impatient for the result of such an inquiry, but fear its consequences; for if it turn out that in addition to having mute superintendents in that country, the churches have such an interest in Sabbath-schools, we are afraid that all the Sunday-school people, big and little, will be making their way thither.

LAST month we referred to the labors of Stephen Paxson and the comfort that he takes in recalling his Sunday-school pioneer experiences. His son, Rev. Wm. Paxson, is traveling in his footsteps, and already has come into well-deserved prominence. We understand that already he has planted about as many schools as his father was permitted to do, and that the sum totals of children, gathered into them, in each case, do not materially differ. If the tree so early bears such an abundance of fruit, what a weighty affluence will it show in its old age! Already, too, he is duplicating the experiences of his father, both pathetic and amusing. Of the latter kind is one that happened in one of the Southern states. Going to a certain town, he said to a man interested in Sunday-schools: "I have come down here to introduce the uniform series of lessons into the Sabbath-schools." "Why, stranger," was the reply, "you can't do that—it's too *hot!*" "Too hot!" "Yes, it's too hot. You go to *uniformin'* those boys in this climate and they'd melt." "Oh," says Paxson, "you mistake me. I came here to introduce the *National Uniform*

Series of Lessons." "The *National Uniform*—why, stranger, that's wuss yet. *We all fit on t'other side durin' the war*"! We have no doubt that he finally succeeded in getting the lessons adopted, but if we would make his work easy in certain parts of the South we shall have to change the name of the series.

Sunday School Gleanings.

The day after Christmas a Philadelphia daily lacerated the feelings of Sunday-school people by thus twitting upon facts: "Yesterday most of the Sunday-schools in the city had their Christmas celebrations and candy distributions; and now about twenty-five thousand boys have suddenly lost their yearning for religious instruction."——Trumbull, in the *Sunday School World*, says that some superintendents pride themselves chiefly on what they do *not* have in their Sunday-schools. This is the way they talk: "We don't use the blackboard in our school; we're quite conservative." "No hi-diddle-diddle music in this school; we're old-fashioned here." "You see that we are not using lesson papers; we don't take up new things quickly." "We never ask for contributions in this Sunday-school; we don't believe in calling on our scholars for money," etc. Now if they would only add: "We don't use any common sense" the list would be appropriately complete. ——The International Lessons, in spite of the general satisfaction they give, occasionally get a rap. To the *Christian Union* it seems to be a chief defect that it nowhere teaches the life of Christ in order. We understand that the Series is to be one of the topics for discussion at the National Convention at Baltimore. Let all the critics there express their minds or forever after hold their peace. ——Ralph Wells remarks that the way to keep little feet quiet is—not to scold, but "to put your hands on their brains." The same authority entreats teachers not to say: "*I've got to—got to—got to.*" "Rather let the church bells ring in your heart to call you to Sunday-school work." ——Rev. John Hall notes in the *Sunday School Times* the lack of reverence there is in many of the Sunday-schools, arising, principally, from the careless, irreverent way in which they are conducted, and asks: "Why should the unspoken impression of a boy looking around the school be: 'I guess it's not of much importance?'" There is no more powerful pulpit to teach reverence or irreverence from than the superintendent's platform.——*The Illustrated Christian Weekly*,—which, by the way, is the sort of an illustrated paper that ought to be found in Christian households—in a sound editorial on Sabbath-schools thus expresses itself: "The Sabbath-school ought never to be tacked on to the end of a long service, or made introductory to one. Our children are entitled to a service of their own. More Bible and less sermons would, we believe, make a healthier, stronger, sounder, and more scriptural piety. Some churches give up the morning, others the afternoon, to Bible study. Do not be content till you get one or the other." ——*Our Bible Teacher* properly characterizes the irregular, unconcentrated and scattering work of an unorganized and undrilled set of teachers as "guerrilla teaching." A good teachers' meeting is as necessary as camp drill.——Rev. E. P. Powell believes in sunshine in the class, and that a teacher can make no worse mistake than to throw a chill on his scholars instead of radiating light and warmth. This is the way that he puts it in the *Sunday School World*: "The thermometer has marked in my green-house a few degrees below the vital line or growth line of some choice

tropicals. The mistake occurred but once, and the degree marked was only a little below the right point, but the foliage immediately loosened and the buds fell. There are some most sensitive ones who can not or will not endure our chill. Explanations will not restore the bloom and foliage. Have soul-shine, then, dear teachers, above all things, and you will be successful."———The *Presbyterian at Work* quotes the petition of the little girl who prayed that the Lord would help her "to rub kitty the way that will make her purr, and not the way that will make her scratch," as a model for teachers to follow in respect to their scholars. It says that "there is a vast deal of rubbing boys the wrong way"—and we somehow have an idea that that is so.———Some one has made the discovery that the era of Bible-classes and Sunday-schools is foretold by the Scriptures, and refers for proof to Ps. 68: 11: "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it." We supplement that by calling attention to the divine idea of the composition of a Sabbath-school as expressed in Deut. 31: 12: "Gather the people together, *men, and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates*, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law." That contravenes the current idea that the Sunday-school is merely a place for children. But it sounds quite authoritative, and we are not sure but that a large number of churches have made themselves amenable to discipline by utterly disregarding its injunctions. We shall hold that idea *in terrorem* over them!———Some one in the California State Convention contended that a real teacher is "born—not made." To this Rev. C. V. Anthony replied that even in the matter of teaching there is such a thing as being "born again," and that that usually takes place at the time of one's spiritual birth. "Every converted man or woman," he thinks, "can be a teacher."———The editor of *The Sunday School Times* affirms that Mrs. Partington is teaching in the Sunday-school. He overheard her teaching a class and speaking of a psaltery as a *pslatery*, the carotid artery as the *cartoid* artery, reticent as *reticient*, and farcical as *farcial*. But as old lady Partington herself would say: "That editor don't know nothin' of the call there is in teachin' for linguisteral entertainments—if so he had better try one of 'em on, like Ike, now, for instance. He'd make any sort o' words lose their temper and get into bad spells."——— J. J. Powell, of Cedar Rapids, used most an admirable illustration to show the power there is in constant shoulder to shoulder work in the Sunday-school. "At the entrance to the great suspension bridge at Niagara," he says, "was posted a notice for the bodies of troops passing there to break step lest the united tread of a battalion of soldiers should wrench that mighty structure from its iron hangings, across which great trains of loaded cars are whirled with safety." Every time that a teacher misses a Sunday he breaks step, and so we lose the force of united tread power.———Our good friend, the *Congregationalist*, approvingly quotes the story told by Rev. John O. Foster, wherein a little boy says of his Sunday-school: "And, ma, don't you think we have had ten teachers this year, and the year is not out yet." And the *Congregationalist* this year has *fifty-two!*

Sunday School Work.

At a ministerial and Sabbath-school convention of the Evangelical Association at Mineral Point, Pa., it was *resolved:* "That the members of our Church who are antagonistic to the Sunday-school cause be reported to the presiding elder—for further orders." Refractory soldiers used to he sent to

the guard-house until they could see their way to duty clear. We would merely hint to that presiding elder that wholesome discipline must be maintained.———The widespread interest in the International Lessons has caused some of the secular papers even to see what a "card" to them their treatment might be. The Troy *Daily Times* places at the head of its "Religious Notices" each Saturday, the title, topic, and golden text of the next day's lesson; and the Providence *Daily Journal* gives full notes on the lesson in each Saturday's issue.———Rev. W. T. Wylie, of Bellefonte, Pa., is doing what he can to get up a "catechism revival;" and he seems likely to succeed. He has secured about one hundred of the most prominent Presbyterian clergymen and laymen to write a short exposition on each question and answer in the Catechism. These he issues, separately, in the form of neat little tracts, numbered to correspond to the number of the question in the Catechism. The names of Drs. Hall, Crosby, Duryea, Talmage, etc., give promise that the "Bellefonte Series" will be of great interest. We like the way Mr. Wylie has gone to work. Instead of joining in the melancholy, hopeless lament over this generation because it knows so little of the Catechism, he has vigorously addressed himself to informing the people about it. And in this he has compelled the admiration of those even who are opposed to it.———The The Rensselaer County (N. Y.) Sunday School Association are making a special point of introducing good temperance literature into the Sabbath-schools of that county. The movement may be said to be already a success. It is pushed by a committee representing all denominations, but we suspect that the moving spirit, after all, is our friend and contributor, J. H. Kellogg, secretary of the association.——— We received from J. G. Snelling, superintendent of the Stamford (Conn.) Baptist Sunday-school a couple of neatly printed Concert Exercises, which were printed on a press owned by the school. One of the teachers, an amateur printer, gives the time that is needed to the publication of such "odds and ends." It is safe to say that everything that comes from that press is thoroughly appreciated by that school. ———The St. Louis Sabbath School Association propose, if it be possible, to bring those eighty thousand uncared-for children into the Sunday-school. To this end it has adopted a resolution asking the churches, through the City Evangelical Alliance, to district the destitute portion of the city, and allot the duty of providing the several districts with Sabbath-schools and other means of grace to the church in each case most convenient or most willing to take up the work. ———Edward Eggleston has received a call from a church in Brooklyn. After fulfilling his season lecture engagements he will preach to it for awhile, at all events, and, perhaps, make a permanent engagement. As the church is a union, independent organization, full of young blood and of pluck, it will be a good opportunity for him to realize his idea of "The Church of the Best Licks." And then, too, we shall be likely to hear from him in a Sunday-school way once more.———Thos. S. Ridgeway, who, for sixteen years has been the efficient and beloved superintendent of the Presbyterian school at Shawneetown, in this state, has been "degraded" from that position to that of State Auditor. While it is a comfort to be absolutely sure that we have in that office a man in regard to whom there is no danger of defalcation, yet we can ill spare him from Sunday-school work. He must manage somehow to see that its due share of credit is carried over onto the state ledger, and then be sure that it is personally balanced.——— The annual election for superintendent of the Benton Street Mission School of St. Louis very properly resulted in returning Mr. E. D. Jones for the fifteenth time to the chair. The occasion was siezed upon by his devoted corps of teachers to give him a complimentary supper as an expression

of their regard and confidence. About sixty teachers sat down to a handsomely and bountifully supplied table, but, as may be imagined, had their best feasting after supper was over,—one of the best things being the speech made by the newly re-elected superintendent.——— We hope that our near neighbor, the *Illustrated Bible Studies* won't think we are spiteful if we just mention the fact that its "illustrations" are "getting no better very fast." The last one on "The Crossing of the Jordan" represents the Israelitish host as safely *fording* that river—a direct contradiction of Scripture and its own exposition of that occurrence. The expositor, too, by the way, gives the meaning of "Caleb" as "all heart," or whole-hearted." If he will consult Webster, even, he will find reason to cur-tail that definition!———The Methodists had a good time at Akron, Ohio, in their Sunday School Union and Tract Society Anniversaries. The three secretaries, Rev. Drs. D. P. Kidder, D. Wise, and J. H. Vincent—representing thirty years of administration—were present and took part in the exercises. Rev. G. A. Peltz was to be there, but was unavoidably detained at home. Rev. J. M. Freeman took his place, remarking as he did so that a glance at Mr. Peltz's initials would exactly indicate his position—he came merely to fill a GAP! And the *Normal Class* says he filled it well.———Mrs. John A. Miller, of Louisville, Ky., whom our readers will more readily know as "Faith Latimer" is now writing the Primary Lessons for the *Sunday School Times*, and is putting into them some good conscientious work.

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—The *Sunday School Helper*, of Pottsville, Pa., says that a certain superintendent the other day successfully tried a new plan of review. He asked a few questions himself and then called upon the teachers to ask some. As fast as the questions came—and they came fast enough to keep him busy—he referred them to other teachers and the scholars for answer. The school was lively, expectant, and animated during that exercise, or we are no readers of child-nature.

—Rev. W. F. Crafts informs us through the *Sunday School Times* that he has found "the path of deliverance through the library nuisance." He discovered it in the Foundry Methodist Sunday-school at Washington, and thus describes it:

> In the entry there is a case of boxes similar to Post Office boxes, but without glass, and each large enough for a dozen books. Each box has a number, indicating the class to which it belongs. A scholar, as he comes into the school, leaves his book in the box of his class—his silicate card remaining in the book with the teacher's and his own name upon it, and a list of numbers indicating the books he wishes. The librarian takes up these books after the school has opened, and changes them, putting back the books for each class into the appropriate box.

The school is dismissed by classes so that there is no undue strife around the Post Office, and, by thus distributing the books the teachers are left undisturbed during the recitations.

—An exchange says that one of the best institutions connected with any Sabbath-school is a young people's meeting or class, held on Sunday afternoons, where all who will come shall be taught what it is to be a Christian and how to be one; where each shall be encouraged to state progress, speak of difficulties, and where, at the close, all may kneel down together, and many short prayers be offered for

aid in those things, in regard to which the class have shown a special need of help.

— Rev. J. M. Buckley, at Chautauqua, gave some sensible hints on the use of language in teaching. It is important not only to have ideas, but to see that they are forcibly expressed. There is no use in spending hours over moulding the bullets if your gun won't send them straight to the mark. But here are some of his suggestions:

It is highly important to be grammatical. Notice, if you are not, that it lessens your influence. Have variety. Think up a few verbs and nouns that mean the same thing and scatter them along. Don't use the same one all the time. All can improve the faculty of speech. I could not talk when a boy except when I was mad. I have made it a study to improve my vocabulary. Choate, said Pinckney, made his wonderful vocabulary by reading the Bible. Shakespeare and Milton, with the dictionary. John Wesley left a Shakespeare with notes. Read Shakespeare, by all means. If you don't like that, read the Bible; that has all the good words in it. Be careful of your pronunciation. If you want to talk well in your class, talk well in private. If you want to drive a dog off your premises, don't say "git out," but "get out." Get your hearts warm and your words will come tripping along.

Literature.

Whatever comes from the pen of Mark Hopkins, D. D., presumably is of interest. So far — and it is high praise to say — we have never been disappointed in our expectation of something good from him. And we are not now, in his new volume of *Strength and Beauty*. The volume is a bound sheaf of his addresses to graduating classes while president of Williams College. The title of the book itself most admirably sets forth the character of the essays in it, for they exhibit both strength and beauty in a wonderful degree. But the typographical errors in it are numerous, and are unworthy of the publishers. New York: Dodd & Mead. $1.75.

When Dr. James Edmunds, of London, was over here last fall, the National Temperance Society succeeded in securing from him three lectures, severally entitled: "The Medical use of Alcohol;" "Stimulants for Women;" and "The Dietetic use of Alcohol." That Society now publishes them in book form under the title of *The Medical use of Alcohol*. Dr. Edmunds holds high rank in his profession in England in the practice of which, and as senior physician to two important hospitals, he has good opportunity for the special enquiry he has conducted in regard to the character of alcohol and its physiological influence. His addresses were plain, straightforward common sense talks. Some of his definitions are exceedingly terse and to the point. In solving the question, for instance, as to whether alcohol is food or stimulant, he says: "Food is that which puts strength into a man, and stimulant is that which gets strength out of a man." Under that there is no doubt in which class alcohol belongs. The book is a good re-inforcement to temperance advocates. Chicago: C. R. Blackall. 60 cents.

As a writer for children, Augusta Larned has few equals. Her *Talks with Girls*, published by Nelson & Phillips, New York, is a capital book for those for whom it was intended. The Talks are plain, sensible talks with girls on happily chosen subjects, and, while they better accomplish the same design, are not written in the severe moral lecture style. They have the merit of being in sympathy with their young auditors. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

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BAAL AND ASHTORETH.

BY REV. LYMAN WHITING, D. D.

THE ingenuities of ancient idolatry are well nigh incredible. Acquaintance with the devices of early idolatries makes one think that almost the whole study of those times was to shape idols with cunning symbolism, and contrive rites, or forms of worship, to match the studied debasement of the idols. Any thing in which power-force could be found would be either turned into a god, or pieced upon some one already invented. No matter for the nature of the object. The hidious crocodile would do just as well as the elegant gazelle; the repulsive snake was rather more to the taste of idol-mongers than the winsome lamb. Any visible force in nature, and even imaginary powers, met the great craving the fallen soul groped for, viz., some *supernatural help* in its great battle with the powers of evil, which all men felt, but none knew how to overcome.

Aloft in the heavens, beyond mortal approach, but daily riding his majestic course, lighting up the globe, leading the countless verdures of earth from germ to bloom and fruitfulness, and ruling the movements of the celestial bodies in time and order, was the magnificent SUN—easy to see and to feel, and soon known as the master *force* in Nature's processes of growth, climate, and in the renovations all forms of life had need of. It was easily seen to be the essential power, the visible monarch of the natural world. It kept time, for it measured out its days, and so its months and years. It warmed and fed, with beams of vitality, the whole earth. Daily, too, it curved its resplendent arch from eastern to western horizons. Nothing else man could see or know about did so much; showed such power, or half so much splendor. Capital stock out of which to make a top-god—a king among deities. To those ancient Yankees, the quick-witted, thinking, inventing, enterprising Phœnicians, goes the credit for nominating, electing, and inaugurating the solar orb to be the monarch god among the endless ingenuities of idolatry for satisfying the hunger of man's moral faculties.

The name Baal was stolen from the Hebrew tongue. It meant *ruler*, *governor*, *lord*. It had been poetically applied to the sun in that language, but always compounded with another word, as Baal-Shemish, i. e., Baal, the sun. But these stripped off the poetry, and enthroned him on the solid prose of the

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term — Baal, the god. But he needs a consort — a wife. All the gods were in pairs. The two sexes were indispensable, in a sensible and very sensuous mythology. A learned bishop thus puts it: "The fundamental idea of all oriental idolatry—traceable from India to Northern Europe—is the primeval power of nature, which divides itself into the *generative* and the *conceptive*, or *productive* powers. Of these two, the male and female powers of nature, the sun and the moon were worshiped under the names of Baal and Astarte, or Ashtoreth." So he had the moon for his wife, and Baal and Ashtoreth were set up in the deity business by almost "universal suffrage." It was, however, a very difficult job to keep her in satisfactory clothes and fashion. In one temple her head-dress was a pair of cow's horns (we still speak of moon's horn.) The Egyptians—real female suffragists — made her their Isis, and "placed the head of a bull upon her own." She wore those horns "as emblems of sovereignty." In one temple she was clothed like a man, in others a long robe was given to her. The commissioners of the solar mythology in one place — a famed temple — put in her right hand a long stick with a cross on its top—"a crown of rays." "A crown of battlements with a man's head in her right hand" are seen everywhere in the fashion plates of her day. Endless dissatisfactions are seen in the whole management of the ancient idolatry. The images and styles of worship were continually changing. New-School and Old-School in pagan theology must have had hot times now and then. Baal, e. g., as the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and the neighbor nations, set him up, was the grand *visible* luminary; everybody could see and believe on him. But devotees got tired of such a bald, stark sovereign. The *mind* of the race grew, and wanted a god with brains and intellectual pretentions, and the peace of Baal was in time disturbed by a rival they called Jupiter,—much the same god, only he had been to college and knew something. The world advanced, and the gods must keep up or lose the throne. Imagine the grave distress of the old, respectable worshipers of the staid established sun, when that Jupiter, claiming to be a thinking and reasoning god, began to get the popular ear, and win away his honors. Then a doughty blade called Hercules — still more human — was put on the throne by some of the nations, and he in turn, pales before Saturn; a star really usurping the honors of the sun successfully.

Poor Ashtoreth was vexed with a still more changeable identity. After reigning as moon-goddess a while, she became Venus, a star, and in later times a woman born at Tyre, and the wife of Adonis. The art-loving, ingenious Greeks next took her in hand, and established the fable of her derivation — with matchless feminine beauty — from the foam of the sea, and called her Aphrodite, and then nicely linked her with the parent idolatry by making the star-name, Venus, she had sometimes borne, a sort of *nom de plume* under which she is known in the world of art until now.

In the Scriptures Baal makes his first appearance Numbers 22:41. That fated religious jockey, Balaam, lending himself to Balak for a job at cursing Israel, was taken by the contractor "up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people." The account does not need repeating. In Judges 2:13 the second mention occurs, and *Ashtoreth* is here beside him. About twenty-five times the name of the god recurs, always as "under the wrath and curse of God." The prophet (Zeph. 1:4) has this "word of the Lord" —the last in Scripture: "and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place," which is said to refer "to the final extirpation of the devotees of Baal." Variations and compounds with the name are about equally numerous; as Baalim, Baali, Baal-Peor, Baal-Zephon, Baal-Zebub, etc. Ashtoreth was the name of a city first noticed in Genesis 14:5—the capital of Og, king of Bashan (Deut.

1:4), and given to Gershom (1 Chron. 6:71), the name "supposed to be derived from the goddess Astarte, adored there."

In the later mythologies both these deities represented the abstract attributes of *good fortune* and *love*, but human sacrifices were offered to Baal, and "bread, liquors, and perfumes" were the offerings to Ashtoreth. While bloody rites formed the worship to him, "dissolute licentiousness" and "the public prostitutes of both sexes were regarded as consecrated to her."

This most ancient idolatry shows remnants of itself in modern times. The Druids, in the British Isles planted it so deeply that the rootlets remain. In Perthshire is the town *Tillie-beltane*, i. e., *the hill of the fire of Baal.* A Druidical temple and a well, held in great veneration, are near it. On *Beltane* morning a procession is formed, the members of which drink of this well and march nine times around it and the temple.

Beltane, or *Bal-tein* morning is May 1st. One ceremony is to cut a circle or trench in the green sod, kindle a line of fire in it, make an oatmeal cake which is divided by lot in equal pieces; the last is called the "black bit." He drawing it is to be "sacrificed to *Baal*," to make the year productive. But instead of being sacrificed "he is compelled to leap three times through the flames." This leaping through a circular flame was a ceremony in Ireland and Wales, and the "St. John's fire" is well known in Norway, Sweden, and Germany. Pictures of that ceremony have been published in this country. The rites are relics of that early idolatry which these two names represent.

We may take hope from the power of the gospel over this most radical and wide spread idolatry. Not only are Baal and Ashtoreth unknown as deities in modern idolatry, but, we suppose, no devotees of false gods in India or China can now be found who would enthrone these ancient gods. The race advances. Even heathenism outgrows some forms of its debasements. Truly, Jesus is the "true Light which lighteth EVERY man (even pagans somewhat) who cometh into the world."

Plymouth Church, Phila.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

BY REV. WM. W. PATTON, D. D.

THE book of Judges, in the Bible, takes its name from the peculiar class of rulers, or political deliverers, who led the people, after an irregular method, during the period between the death of Joshua and the institution of a monarchy. No provision seems to have been made for a successor to Joshua, either by a general arrangement in the Mosaic code, or by a special appointment such as designated him to succeed Moses. His work had been unique, and almost exclusively of a military character. He was the successful general who gave Israel possession of the promised land, and divided it among the tribes. In that important work he could have no successor, and in the closing years of his life his influence seems to have been moral rather than magisterial among the chosen people, while the terror of his name as commander of the army sufficed to keep in awe the hostile nations around. The subsequent leadership God left to be controlled by the exigencies of the transition period in question. Ordinarily the local tribal organization sufficed; but in times of war a wider and more central authority was needed, and then a "Judge" was raised up to meet the crisis.

The leadership was therefore martial

rather than civil; so that we must not be misled by the usual associations of the word. The "Judge" was not a grave, dignified magistrate, listening to contending parties and deciding litigated cases, but a fiery, mountain chieftain, burning with patriotic ardor, and vindicating the rights of God's people against invaders and oppressors. Barak and Gideon will be recognized at once as such heroes; Samson, also, and Jephthah. They came forth suddenly, as the peril required, and turned the tide of war against the heathen conquerors. As the calamities under which the people suffered were divine judgments for their sins, and especially for their idolatries, so these deliverers were recognized as divinely inspired for their peculiar work. The second chapter of this book gives the key to the history of this tumultuous period. The name "Judges" is in Hebrew, *Shophetim*, and corresponds with the similar title *Suffetes*, in the cognate Phœnician language, bestowed on the chief magistrates among the Carthaginians. This book names thirteen in all, to-wit: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, whose heroic acts are particularly described, and Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, of whom little is said except that they ruled. Two other judges are mentioned in the immediately succeeding history recorded in the first book of Samuel, viz., Eli and Samuel. But these were of a somewhat different character; the one acting because of his office as high priest, and the other because of his special call to be a prophet; and each for peace rather than for war.

The length of time covered by the book of Judges has been quite variously estimated. If we add together the years which the narrative attaches to each separate Judge, we make 410 years. In Acts 13: 20 our English version gives 450 years; but the order of the words in some of the best Greek manuscripts is so different as to make the period there mentioned refer to the times before the Judges. The difficulty in settling the matter definitely arises from these facts: that in the case of two of the Judges the time is omitted; that in other cases round numbers are used, forty years occurring three times; and that probably some of them ruled simultaneously in different parts of the land. The most of them appeared to have held sway chiefly in the northern portion of Palestine.

As little certainty is there in relation to the authorship and date of the book. Not a few modern critics would bring the date of composition down even as late as the time of Ezra; because in chapter 18: 30 it is said that Micah and his sons "were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land"—an expression which they interpret as referring to the final captivity of the ten tribes. But such an idea is at war with all that we know of the religious condition of the land under David and Solomon, while the next verse, compared with Psalm 78: 60, 61, would seem to show that the language refers to a far earlier and local subjugation; in fact, to the one described in the fourth chapter of 1 Samuel. And even if the reference were to the final captivity, the words in question might have been added to the original narrative by Ezra, when making an inspired rescension of the sacred canon. More trustworthy data for an opinion as to the date of composition are derived from other expressions of the book, such as the oft-repeated remark that "in those days there was no king in Israel," implying a marked consciousness of a somewhat recent change having taken place. There is also the very significant statement, in 1: 21, that "the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem, unto this day;" which would show that the writer penned the account before David's capture of Jebus (the citadel of Jerusalem) as recorded in 2 Samuel 5: 6–9. Thus we have much to favor the Jewish traditions in the Talmud, that the prophet Samuel was the author of the book. As he lived far into Saul's

reign, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, this may explain why so much prominence is given to events connected with that tribe in chapters 19–21. Whoever wrote it used previous records, as of Deborah's song and Jotham's parable, made at the time of the events.

The contents of the book are in nature varied and interesting, while the facts given are graphically pictured. Dean Stanley, in his "History of the Jewish Church," expresses a judgment with which will accord that of every intelligent student of this part of God's word. He says: "For merely human interests, for the lively touches of ancient manners, for the succession of romantic incidents, for the consciousness that we are living face to face with the persons described, for the tragical pathos of events and characters, there is nothing like the history of Judges from Othniel to Eli." But to appreciate this simple yet stirring narrative, one must rid himself very thoroughly of modern conceptions of life and society, and to some extent even of our current ideas of morals and religion. He must conceive of Palestine in its bold, geographical peculiarities, of the people in the rude and primitive state which then characterized them, and of God's dealings with them as modified by the condition of the world in that age of ignorance and crudeness. The central principle of religion can never change — be it called love, or faith, or obedience — but knowledge of its connected truths and outward forms and applications may vary as the ages make progress; of this fact the Bible affords abundant evidence, as the reader passes from Patriarchal to Mosaic times, and thence to the Christian dispensation.

Let us place ourselves back, then, at the era of the Judges. The Israelites are nominally and largely in possession of the promised land; that is, they have conquered the principal part of the territory, and broken the power of the Canaanite kingdoms. They have also acquired courage and military skill. The land itself is a succession of hills and valleys, and the summits of the central range rise to the height of 2500 feet above the Mediterranean, on the west, and 1000 feet higher still above the deep gorge through which the Jordan runs, on the east. The people soon acquire the character and habits of mountaineers. They become bold, warlike, independent, clannish, ready for emergencies, and capable of being roused to deeds of patriotic daring. They are nursed in simple modes of life, as herdsmen and hunters, and as hardy, watchful agriculturalists, who, amid many dangers, reap their harvests with a sword at their side. With the exception of worshiping the true God, they have largely the traits of the surrounding nations, not being in advance of them in general civilization, for they have just come from a nomadic life in the desert, and have fought their way to the present hazardous peace. Only here and there a tribe becomes so wedded to quiet husbandry as to be slow to respond to the rallying cry of war. They have enemies on every side. The remnants of the Canaanites are numerous and malignant, and possess strongholds in the mountains whence they make incursions for plunder, if not with hope of recovering their old territory. Along the borders, too, the nations look with anger on the new comers, with their sudden conquest and their strange religion, and are ready to measure swords upon the least provocation. There are the Philistines, at the southwest corner, along the Mediterranean — veteran warriors, with men of gigantic stature among them, remnants of the Anakim, worshipers of Dagon, and inhabiting cities of noted strength. Further up the coast are the devotees of Baal, the Phœnicians; lords of the sea, rich with the gains of commerce, and constant tempters of their neighbors. On the east are the Midianites; wild tribes of the desert, with innumerable camels, and they come like swarms of locusts across the Jordan, and ravage the land. And to the south-east are the corrupt but powerful Ammonites and

Moabites; cruel worshipers of Moloch, who often succeed in putting Israel to tribute for long years. Also far to the north are the warlike Hivites, of the Lebanon range. God purposes to use these various foes to test the fidelity of his covenant people, and to keep them trained to needful military exercises, as we learn from the statement in chapter 3: 1–4.

And now occurred what we might have expected from weak human nature. There came on a mixed experience of religion and idolatry, of peace and war, of order and misrule. Different writers have characterized this as the Heroic, the Barbaric, the Anarchic Age of the Israelites. There is much to justify each view. The generation which came in with Joshua, trained previously under Moses, felt the influence of those two leaders all their lives. The succeeding generations retrograded, lost faith in God, lapsed into idolatry, and sank into many barbarisms. Scattered over a wide territory, with no common ruler, and with only the tabernacle at Shiloh as a centralizing religious influence, they became twelve clans rather than one nation. These acted separately, or by twos and threes, in war and in peace. There was thus religious weakness and political anarchy, and we read of raids, conquests, and defeats, which resemble the Bedawin and Turcoman life of to-day. As a divine chastisement for their sins, the Israelites were allowed to come into the power of their enemies, until they were sensible of their folly and ingratitude, and sought again the help of Jehovah, the living and true God.

In the times of defeat and oppression the national deliverers, of whom this book speaks, would start up, often at the lowest ebb of the people's fortunes. Patriotic and religious spirits were they, with more faith and courage than other virtues; fired with the idea of saving Israel and re-establishing the ancient and true worship, and sometimes caring more for the end than scrupulous as to the means. These heroes God used, according to their temperament and circumstances, to accomplish the needed deliverance. They were often very imperfect characters in the details of life, judged by the better standards of the present age. They were guilty of personal immoralities, as in Samson's relations with Philistine women. They resorted to acts in behalf of their people which can not be vindicated, as in Ehud's assassination of Eglon, and Jael's treachery towards Sisera. They had superstitious ideas as to divine aid, as seen in Jephthah's rash vow. Such things the impartial pen of inspiration records as historic facts, as the rude and ignorant way in which earnest men worked out their mission, and not as models for imitation. And yet the Epistle to the Hebrews hesitates not to mention Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah by name, as among those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, and wrought righteousness." They were characterized by the weakness as well as by the strength of their age. They were characteristically Orientals. Nearly all the patriarchs indulged in practices which were counted scarcely a blemish, often indeed a virtue, in their day, but which would now exclude one from decent society, and perhaps consign him to the state-prison! Religion and morality have been gradually brought up to a high standard by a divine educational process running through many centuries. The Judges were the heroes of their times; men who believed in the true God, who hated idolatry and its abominations, who were willing to risk life to carry out a divine mission, and to save the chosen people. With all their imperfections and even occasional crimes they stand out in the history far above their fellows, in faith, in self-sacrifice, in the elements of true manhood. The book which records their deeds has therefore a biographic as well as a generally historic value. It has often stimulated God's people in the subsequent ages to deeds of heroism in behalf of their country and the church. In a

broader view it shows how the chosen nation was disciplined by adversity, and was prepared for the monarchy, and thus, under David and Solomon, for the full development of their character, resources, and religious ritual.

CHRONOLOGY OF JUDGES.

THE Book of Judges contains chronological data in connection with the occurrences which it records. It is a suggestive fact, with reference to the peculiarities of his sources, and the manner in which he used them, that the first numerical statement of time given by the author refers to the duration of the oppression of Israel by Chushan Rishathaim, king of Aram. Concerning the occurrences between the death of Joshua and the time of Chushan, related in the introductory chapters, no dates are given, and their duration can only be approximately ascertained. The table of chronological data is conveniently divided into two parts; from Chushan to the domination of Ammon, and from that to the death of Samson.

Israel served Chushan	8	years.	
Had rest under Othniel	40	"	
Served Moab	18	"	
Had rest under Ehud	80	"	(40 ?)
Served Jabin	20	"	
Had rest under Barak	40	"	
Served Midian	7	"	
Had rest under Gideon	40	"	
Was ruled by Abimelech	3	"	
Had Tola for Judge	23	"	
Jair Judge	22	"	
Total	301	years.	(261 ?)

Among these numbers, only the statement that after Ehud's victory there followed eighty years of rest excites special attention. The number forty is by no means an unhistorical, round number. Nevertheless it seems manifestly to express the duration of a period, particularly that of a generation. In forty years the generation of the desert died out. The statements that after the achievements of Othniel, Deborah, and Gideon, respectively, a period of forty years passed in rest, bring to light the internal ground of renewed apostasy, namely, that after the death of the generation which had witnessed the deeds of the heroes, another rose up which had no living resemblance of them. So much stress may properly be laid on this internal ground as to make the number eighty after Ehud's exploit very remarkable in its singularity; so remarkable, in fact, as to incline one to suppose that the original reading was forty. Apart from every other consideration, this supposition would have much in its favor, if it were certain — which, however, despite the statement in ch. 4: 1, it is not — that the number in question was also intended to give the length of Ehud's subsequent life. It would also give a clearness unusual in chronological matters to the statement of Jephthah that three hundred years had passed since Israel gained a firm footing in Heshbon, beyond the Jordan (ch. 11: 26). For from the year in which Jephthah says this, backward to the first year of Chushan, would on this reckoning be 261+18=279 years. Twenty years would very satisfactorily fill up the gap between the last of Joshua's conquests and the commencement of the Aramæan domination. For although the kings of Sihon and Og were defeated by Moses seven years earlier, the two and a half trans-Jordanic tribes came into *possession*, properly speaking, only after the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 22). If the number eighty be left untouched, we get a period of three hundred and nineteen years from Jephthah back to Chushan's domination, to which the interval of twenty (or twenty-seven) years must be added, for this length of time must in any case have elapsed between the entrance into Canaan and the invasion of Chushan (cf. ch. 2: 10; 3: 7). But it is natural to suppose that Jephthah in his letter to the king of Ammon would use the larger, not the smaller, number of which the case

admitted, in order to prove the right of Israel to its land. The change of eighty into forty is also of importance with reference to other chronological combinations, as will appear farther on.

2. In ch. 10: 7 the historian states that God, by reason of Israel's renewed apostasy, delivered them into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites. The statement gives the impression that this domination of these nations over Israel was contemporaneous, but exerted over different parts of the land. The narrative then proceeds to speak first of the tyranny of Ammon, which lasted eighteen years, and then of that of the Philistines, which continued forty years. From the first of these oppressors Jephthah delivered the eastern tribes; against the other, Samson *began* the war of liberation.

It certainly seems as if the author of our book wished to convey the lesson that, as time went on, the condition of kingless Israel became continually worse. At first, hostile attacks had come from one side only; a great victory was then won, and "the land rested." After Gideon this expression no longer occurs. Moreover, it is never said of subsequent heroes that "they judged;" and the duration of their official activity no longer reaches to forty years. These facts are not to be neglected in our chronological survey.

The combination of the chronological data of the Book of Judges with those found elsewhere, and especially with the well-known sentiment in 1 Kings 6: 1, according to which four hundred and eighty years intervened between the exodus from Egypt and the building of the temple, is still attended with difficulty. Doubtless, the difficulty is itself a most striking proof of the antiquity, originality, and independence of our book. Had it been composed at a late period, by the same hand that wrote the Book of Kings, would not its author have attempted to get rid of these difficulties? But the fidelity of the Old Testament tradition never shows itself more clearly than in cases in which, according to modern notions, it had been so easy for an editor to remove all occasion for resorting to hypothesis. For without these, it is at this day impossible to produce agreement. We know that agreement must exist,—for, surely, ancient authors were not incapable of arithmetical addition!—but coercive, scientific proof of it we do not possess. The opinions of even the oldest Jewish chronologists were divergent. In support of our hypothesis we adduce the passage 1 Sam. 12: 11, where it is said that "Jehovah sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel," and delivered Israel from their enemies round about. Now Bedan is, without doubt, to be understood of Samson, the hero out of Dan. The passage, therefore, presents the peculiarity that it places Samson before Jephthah. Keil insists that the Ammonitish and Philistine oppressions occurred, not successively, but simultaneously. It is undoubtedly correct to say, that we are not first to sum up the numbers relating to the occurrences set forth in chaps. 11 and 12 thus.—

Ammon	18 years
Jephthah	6 "
Ibzan	7 "
Elon	10 "
Abdon	8 "
Total	49 years

and then add the years of the Philistine domination and those of Samson. Just as in 1 Sam. 12: 11, Samson stands before Jephthah, so in Judg. 10: 7 the Philistines are named before the Ammonites: "Jehovah gave Israel into the hands of the Philistines and of the sons of Ammon." That notwithstanding this Jephthah's deeds are first related has its ground in the fact that in this way the achievements against the Philistines connect themselves with the principal wars of Israel in the days of Samuel and Saul. According to ch. 13: 1, the Philistine domination lasted forty years. After Samson's great victory at Lehi, it is remarked, ch. 15: 20, and afterwards repeated, that "he judged Israel twenty years." These twenty years can not be

included in the forty. It is against the spirit of the book, after such a victory to speak of Samson's "judging," and yet to suppose that at the same time Israel continues to be given "into the hands of the Philistines." Therefore, when the prediction concerning Samson (ch. 13: 5) only says that "he shall begin to deliver Israel," the meaning is that he will not thoroughly subdue them, as was done in the days of Samuel and David, for after the death of Samson their power again became dominant. Now, if this be undoubtedly correct, the supposition that the Ammonitish and Philistine servitudes commenced exactly at the same time, would compel us, notwithstanding 1 Sam. 12: 11, to place Jephthah long before Samson; for the Ammonitish domination lasted only eighteen years, and Jephthah ruled only six. The following conjecture is therefore to be preferred: With Gideon's death the land ceased "to have rest." Judges of forty years' service appear no more; but a servitude of forty years begins. The Philistine attack occurred perhaps soon after Abimelech, induced probably by reports of the discord that prevailed in Israel. While in the north and east Tola and Jair judged forty-five years, the Philistine servitude began in the south-west; and while Ammon oppressed Gilead in the east, Samson smote the Philistines in the south-west. The Gileadites make Jephthah their chieftain "because he had *begun* to smite the enemy" (cf. on ch. 11: 1, 2); for Samson also had become Judge when he had commenced to put down the Philistines (cf. on ch. xv. 20).

The combination of the chronological data of our book with those of Samuel, and especially the important one in 1 Kings 6: 1, is further facilitated by the fact that in 1 Sam. 12: 11 Eli is not named between Jephthah and Samuel. The inference from this omission is, that the forty years during which he ruled are not to be separately taken into account. He was high-priest during the occurrence of the events in the north and south. The following additional conjectures may therefore be regarded as probable: The war spoken of in 1 Sam. 4: 1, commenced by Israel against the Philistines, may be held to indicate the new vigor which the victories of Samson and the terrible catastrophe at Gaza had infused into the people. About thirty years had probably elapsed since the death of Samson. Then follow twenty years of penitence on the part of Israel (1 Sam. 7: 2), dated from the exile of the ark and its restoration to Kirjath-jearim, that great event with which the Book of Judges is also acquainted. If next, according to ancient tradition, we add forty years for the time of Samuel and Saul, and forty for the reign of David, we arrive at the number four hundred and eighty in a manner sufficiently satisfactory and historically probable, as shown by the following tables:—

Wanderings in the desert	40	Chushan	8
Conquest of the land	7	Othniel	40
Until Chushan	20	Moab	18
	67	Ehud	40
		Jabin	20
		Barak	40
		Midian	7
		Gideon	40
			213

Abimelech	3				
Tola	23	=	Philistines	40	
Jair	22				
Ammon	18		Samson	20	= 90
Jephthah	6				
Ibzan	7	=	From death of Samson to Samuel, about	30	
Elon	10				
Abdon	8				
	97				

Samuel before the victory (1 Sam. 7: 10)	20
Samuel and Saul	40
David	40
Solomon	3
	103

Therefore,	From Exodus to Chushan	67
	Chushan to Gideon	213
	Abimelech to Abdon	97
	Samuel to Solomon	103
		480 years.

Those who accept the eighty years of Ehud, as has hitherto been done, are obliged with Keil to reduce the interval from the death of Moses to Chushan to seventeen years, and that from the death of Jair to Solomon to one hundred and twenty-three, whereby Samson's judgeship vanishes, and no account is taken

of the twenty years preceding the victory under Samuel.

3. In conclusion, we remark that in the historical sketch of the Apostle Paul, Acts 13: 18–20, where he says, verse 18, "and God nourished them forty years in the wilderness;" verse 19, "and destroying seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot;" verse 20, "and after that he gave them Judges for about four hundred and eighty years, until Samuel the prophet," the reading four hundred and eighty can scarcely be the original one. The apostle evidently had his eye on our canonical books: in verses 17 and 18, on the Books of Moses; in verse 19 on the Book of Joshua; in verse 20, on the Book of Judges; for this is followed by references to the Books of Samuel. As he was undoubtedly acquainted with the number four hundred and eighty in Kings, he could not assign four hundred and fifty years to the period from Joshua to Samuel, with which moreover no ancient tradition coincided. The conjectural reading, three hundred and fifty, appears therefore to be preferable; and it certainly is not a matter of indifference that, adding the numbers one after another as was done by Jewish tradition in general, three hundred and fifty years would actually represent the period from Chushan to the end of the Philistine domination. True, it would show that Paul also read only forty years in connection with Ehud. The objection that Paul also assigns a definite period of forty years for the reign of Saul, for which the Old Testament gives no authority, is destitute of force, for the Book of Samuel gives no information at all concerning the length of this king's reign, and the Apostle followed the view, entertained also by Josephus (*Ant* 6: 14, 9), according to which the reign of Saul, during and after the lifetime of Samuel, lasted forty years. It was sought in this way to explain 1 Sam. 13: 1.—*Cassel in Lange's Com.*

THE ORDER OF GIDEONITES.

BY REV. SIMEON GILBERT.

THE Book of Judges does not pretend to give a complete history of the period. It aims to present a few outline sketches of representative events, and representative persons—just enough to characterize the spirit of the age, and reveal certain ruling principles in God's government of men. In this marvelously life-like series of historical tableaux the most brilliant figure, on the whole, is that of Gideon.

Gideon is the ideal of that unnumbered, ever-enlarging host who master and lead their times. He stands in the apostolic succession of the royal, elect souls who unconsciously catch, embody, and utilize the latent inspirations of the ages as they go. He has a conspicuous place on this best roll of historic men. Only rarely has he had an equal in the highest prophetical element of heroic character. Far-seeing, clear-seeing, and withal profoundly moved by his visions, he enacts a part which could have been carried out only by the aid of such foreseeing. He was born into the list of nature's noblemen, but was born again, and from above, into the sacred fraternity of Reformers and Deliverers, who come forward, in great emergencies, to brother their race and champion the cause of the oppressed. The appearance of such men breaks in as from some opened heavens. The people, as they come to know them, rally at their call, and by acclamation accept their leadership. Gideon was most evidently penetrated with that force of moral and religious conviction which gives nerve and fibre to those persons who wield a

dominant influence over their fellows. He ranks with such men as John Huss, Charles XII., Martin Luther, Gustavus Adolphus, Cromwell, John Knox, John Brown, Charles Sumner — none of them perfect characters, but all of them men who have "seen visions and dreamed dreams," and found therein both a promise and a potency for their subsequent moral heroism and great achievement.

Gideon's "call," with its attendant miraculous signs and helps to his faith, did not come until he was considerably advanced in life. But wholly a surprise to himself, as it was, it did not find him wholly unprepared. He was no raw upstart. The silent years of private endurance, and deep musings over the distresses, wrongs, and wrong-doings of his people, and the "hope against hope," till the heart was sick, that the Lord would, somehow, interpose for their rescue, had wrought within his soul a bitter mood that was on the point of sinking into a chronic moodiness of unutterable dejection. The iron of the oppressor had entered into his soul. Dejection was touching the verge of despair. It was just at that point when the heavenly vision descended upon his bitterness and gloom.

For seven years the Israelites had been under the heel of the Midianitish oppression. Countless hordes of fierce, greedy, Bedawin of the desert, from the region east of the Jordan, had annually invaded the land, like infinite swarms of grasshoppers, devouring and pillaging all before them. They came, not for revenge, nor for conquest and murder, but for plunder. Throughout the country all the most accessible and fertile regions were utterly devoured. To save anything, the people were obliged to retire to the caves, ravines, and mountain fastnesses. It was at such a place that the angel of the Lord found Gideon, threshing wheat in a *wine-press*. Either there was not enough for the oxen to tread out, or else he was obliged to conceal what he had from the Midianites — as watchful as they were rapacious. Weary of beating out with a stick his scant stock of grain, and compelled to cower out of sight of the invader, Gideon was suddenly roused from his disconsolate musings by a Stranger. The form of the salutation, though not unusual to oriental courtesy, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor," had in it a tone which evidently touched the heart of Gideon. In his mood just then of abject skepticism, if it had not been for the startling seriousness and kindliness of the tones, he might have taken the salutation as if it were meant in sarcasm. The reply shows what his mind had been brooding over: "Pray, sir! if the Lord be with us, why, then, is all this befallen us? and where are all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying: 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' but now the Lord hath *forsaken* us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites!" That was a pitiable case. The pathos of the words could hardly be exceeded. Surely it must take a word of "strong consolation" to kindle again the glow of resolution and hope in that man's weary, aching heart. Scarcely the stuff, one thinks, that heroes are made of! But a look will sometimes do what a word could not. Peter found it so, when one *look* from the eye of Jesus broke the heart of the denier of his Lord, drove him out into penitence, and saved him from despair. Gideon, at this critical moment in his life, felt a look shining upon and into his very soul, such as he had never known before. The Stranger he saw to be a friend — the Friend indeed. "And Jehovah looked upon him and said, 'Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not *I* sent thee?'" Jesus was made known to his disciples in the familiar "breaking of bread." Gideon recognizes the Messenger, thus revealed to him by look and word. He recognizes also the meaning of the Divine commission conferred upon himself. But, he thinks, it can not be! Instantly,

under the shadow of such a commission, one thought filled his soul — it was the thought of his personal incompetence and unworthiness. A feeling of the most profound humility was awakened by the thought of God. "O my Lord, wherewith shall *I save* Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house."

Every point here is singularly instructive, as indicating the inner workings of his mind, and the way by which the Divine hand was leading him on in the gradual development of his faith, and thereby, of his character. Gideon sees clearly, and feels keenly, the fact as to his personal inadequacy for the task. A good beginning — provided he does not stop there. He will not stop. The gracious Teacher will lead him on to the next step in his spiritual growth. And the Lord said, "Surely I will be with thee! and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." Was that too good, too great to believe? Could it be real? Was it only an illusion of his fancy, born of what he remembered God *had* done for his ancestors, and he vaguely *wished* might be done again? He did believe it to be real, but asked the Lord to "help his unbelief" by giving him a sign, that he might know "whether *thou* art he that talkest with me." He entreated the Stranger to wait until he might bring forth an offering. How the Guest would receive it, he thought, would indicate whether or not he were a celestial person. The Angel of Jehovah consented to stay. Hastily the kid was slain and the simple meal prepared. With feelings of something more than mere oriental hospitality, the offering was presented, when, the Guest touching the offering with his staff, a sacrificial flame bursts from the rock, as from an altar, and consumes it. The preparation brought as an offering of food was accepted by fire as a sacrifice. In a moment the Angel had gone; the vision had vanished. And Gideon, the John Brown (and much more) of his time was left trembling in the solemnity of the hour, amazed that he had met face to face the living God. Gradually, like other prophetic souls similarly favored, he grew calm and easy under these special endowments of God. He had received a divine calling to the leadership of his people, for their deliverance. With holy humility and joy he recognized his commission. Trepidation was at an end. A strange peace of mind took possession of him.

But that very night his new faith was put to the severest test. He was taught that the chosen of the Lord have something to do, as well as to enjoy. Obedience to the great commission would show itself in the prompt doing of the duties, however trying, that lay nearest at hand. It was through idolatry that the nation had apostatized from God. It was because of their sin that the foreign foe had been allowed to invade and oppress. First of all, then, the nation, in order to be saved, must turn to Jehovah. But judgment must begin at the house of God. The great reform must begin at the home of the reformer. That very night a voice came to him bidding him, Up, hew down and destroy the family altar dedicated to Baal, and taking one of his father's bullocks, offer it in sacrifice to God upon the rock. This was truly a bold act. It was one which cost him the hardest struggle of his life. It was as when a man, just converted, goes home to announce to his own family the great change in his heart, and to set up there the "family altar." In this instance it was an act which evinced the highest courage. But the command was unfalteringly carried out, that very night. As the morning dawned, the members of his own family and of his father's clan awoke to discover the altars and images of their worship in smouldering ruins, and the bullock smoking upon the new altar.

Thus Gideon's forty years' administration was begun, opening with a piece of the boldest iconoclasm, and accompanied with an act of priestly self-consecration.

Henceforth, girt about with promptings

of a holy sort, and fed with thoughts of reverence and love for what is highest and best, he "walked with God," and, by the audacious courage of faith and patience of hope, seized the mastership of his people — the youngest child of the home coming forth the acknowledged deliverer of the nation. How he went through the land, sounding in trumpet-tones the divine call to arms; how a powerful army was speedily brought together; how the cowards were eliminated and sent home; and how, by another test, at the brook or fountain, the military force was reduced to only three hundred men, who could be as safely trusted to keep their trumpets silent and their torches hidden within their pitchers until the exact moment came, as to break their dark-lanterns and blow the trumpet-blast the instant the signal should be given; how Gideon's faith was granted one more divine token just before the panic-awakening onset was made; and how the vast Midianitish encampment, terror-stricken, broke into wild, ruinous rout, leaving behind all their boundless plunder — all this is familiar to readers, and need not be narrated here. Enough to say, the promise, which the Angel of the Lord had made to the young man whom he had found trying to thresh out a little wheat in a wine-press, was completely verified. The thoughtful youth, destitute of any social or official position, the youngest of his father's family, and that family a poor one, did become the rescuer and reformer of his people. Overtaken by a divine call just when his heart seemed most nearly consumed by patriotic grief and despair, he soon grew to be, though without the title, one of the kingliest of rulers.

Has the race of such men come to an end? By no means. On the contrary, their tribe increases. There is, in fact, an increasing number, of both men and women, whose souls brood with an ineffable pity and tension of desire, in view of wrongs which still crush, intimidate, and plunder whole classes of persons; and who, often at their wits' end, feel as if they would, but can not, do something to lift off the horrible disabilities that oppress others. While they muse, the fire burns, until once more, and often, as in the olden time, some divine call to definite action is made clear. The humility of faith is crowned with visions; and earnest thought, searching anxiously and long for some new and open way, has its dreams that dawn upon the mind with an unwonted wisdom for practical suggestion and plan; and so, along all lines of social activity, new modes of beneficence appear, new instrumentalities are brought to light. And what is best of all, a constantly increasing portion of the Christian world is gradually, although with unreasonable slowness of heart, learning to recognize the look and the voice of the Angel of the Covenant, and to listen to that voice which never yet has ceased to vibrate in the atmosphere of this world, and which, from that rocky cave where Gideon once experienced his resurrection from deathly despair, is echoing still all round the globe, saying: "I will be with thee!" He who chooses to listen may hear the same gracious voice to-day. There are men in our own generation who hear it now as distinctly as ever Gideon did. The order of Gideonites is perpetual.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

LESSON XIV.—APRIL 4, 1875.—ISRAEL'S PROMISE.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Joshua 24: 14-18. Commit 14-18; Primary Verse, 16.

14 Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods;

17 For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord our God will we serve and his voice will we obey."—JOSH. 24: 24.

TOPIC.—A WHOLE HEART OR NONE.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Deut. 6: 1-25**	**All the Heart Demanded.**
T.	**Deut. 30: 5-20**	**Commanded to Choose.**
W.	**Ezek. 20: 29-39**	**Polluted Gifts Rejected.**
Th.	**Matt. 19: 16-24**	**Could not Give his Riches.**
F.	**Acts 5: 1-11**	**Kept Back Part of the Price.**
S.	**Matt. 10: 32-42**	**More than Father or Mother.**
S.	**Matt. 6: 1-24**	**No man can Serve Two Masters.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—What were the mercies that Joshua had enumerated? 1-13. In view of these mercies what two things does Joshua ask the Israelites to do? 14. Could they serve him "in sincerity and truth" *without* putting away their idols? How small a part of our heart do you think God will be satisfied with? Did God ask the Israelites to serve him before he had done anything for them? 13. Does he ask *any* one to serve him before He has first done something for them? See 1 John 4: 9, 10. What choice did Joshua give them? Does God *compel* any one to serve him? Why?

2.—What did the people reply? 16-18. Could the gods spoken of by Joshua in the fifteenth verse have done anything like that? Has Christ done anything for us similar to that which God did for the Jews in bringing them out of Egypt? Gal. 5: 1. What can the world do for us that can compare with that which Christ has done and can do? What sort of a bargain should we make if we turned from Him and took all that the world can give us? See Mark 8: 36.

3.—What does Joshua reply to them? 19. What does he mean by saying that they "can not" serve God? What had he said concerning himself and his house in verse 15? Did he believe that he and his house could serve Him but that they could not? Read Matt. 6: 24 and then see if you can tell what he means. What does he tell them will happen if they turn away from the Lord and serve other gods? 20. Does the fact that the Lord is now doing us much good indicate that he always will continue to do so if our hearts are turned to other things? Prov. 1: 24-31.

4.—Do you think the people were in earnest in their purpose to serve God? See verse 31; Judg. 2: 7. What two things did Joshua use as witnesses of their promise? 22, 27. Where was the stone set up? 26. When did Joshua die? 29. Where was he buried? 30. What honorable title did he have? 29. Was that given him only after death, or was he known by that all through his life?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

JOSHUA'S EXHORTATION.—This follows as a fit conclusion of the mercies recapitulated in the preceding part of the chapter. In enumerating them he has a purpose in view. That purpose is to show that their God is worthy of their deepest love, and that he is entitled to it. God asks for nothing to which he has not proved his right. He asks our love, not for what he is going to do for us, but

for what he has done. 1 John 4:9, 10. So Joshua first sums up the benefits that God has conferred upon them, and then demands that they shall put away the false gods in their midst. *Whom your fathers served in Egypt.* Here is the only absolute assertion that the Israelites were idolaters when in Egypt, although the fact might well be surmised from many other circumstances. It is not in accordance with the whole testimony of the Book of Joshua, and, especially, with what is said in chapter 23:8, to suppose that the Jewish nation at this time was at all given to idolatry. Possibly in some concealed instances there may have been a few families that still clung to the gods of Chaldea and of Egypt, but the people as a whole were free from such abominations. Had they been given to the worship of idols, it is at least probable that we should have had an account of their surrender similar to that which took place when Jacob purified his household. Gen. 35:4. But Joshua had a prophet's prescience of things that should so shortly come to pass. Judg. 2:10–13. His address is burdened with the sadness that came of his insight into futurity. The chosen people were living side by side with the remnants of the nations whom they had conquered. Idols were in their very midst. What else than contamination could be the result? Hence his earnest and oft-repeated exhortation, his presentation of historic testimony, the solemn renewal of the covenant, and the impressive memorial. If he could not prevent future defection, he would at least do all that he could to guard against present apostasy.

Choose ye.—It is wonderful under what circumstances God gives his people liberty of choice. Here they had been shown that the Lord had perfected his right to their allegiance, and yet they are told to choose. They were bought, yet free! Christ has counted out our ransom in drops of his own life-blood, yet he compels no one to take His yoke upon him even though His yoke is easy and his burden is light. Whether we serve God or the devil is matter of free choice. But God desires that we shall choose—be either one thing or the other. 1 K. 18:21; Rev. 3:15. Leaving out the Lord, to what was their choice reduced! —"the gods your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell." And what an alternative—a choice between weakness and impotency! Presented to us in the form of the World and the Flesh. (The devil, however, is in partnership with them—it is "The World, The Flesh, *and* The Devil." Most people are prone to think that they deal only with the first two.) What could the "gods of their fathers" or the "gods of the Amorites" have done for them in their crushing Egypt bondage, in their sore extremity at the Red Sea, in their wilderness journeyings, when so many times they were ready to perish, at Jordan, at Jericho, and during the conquest? So long as there were no burdens to oppress and no calamities to avert, these "gods" might seem to answer to their office. And if there were in this life no trials before us, no afflictions that need a sympathy more than human, if there were no "foes for us to fight" too great for our own conquering, if we were not in constant need of divine aid here and sure to be wretched without God's smile hereafter, it might do for us to surrender ourselves to the allurements of the world and the gratification of our senses. But so long as these are but masks which hide the stern realities to which, sooner or later, we must be brought face to face, we can not lightly treat God's summons to choose between him and them.

THE PEOPLE'S REPLY—Was manly, straightforward, and devoted, as it should have been. They had tasted and seen that the Lord was good, and were not disposed, after such a feast, to return to any of their former abominations. And how can *any one* who has sat at the Lord's table ever turn from it to the "weak and beggarly elements" of this

world! It is only the Lord that "satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

JOSHUA'S TEST.—*Ye can not serve the Lord.* Yet he could say: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." He evidently, therefore referred to no moral impossibility. As in later times it was announced: "No man can serve two masters," so Joshua meant here to say that the people could not serve the Lord and do homage unto idols also. Yet it may be well to consider the similar assertion made in John 6: 44, 45, 65; Mark 10: 24–27; and read Deut. 30: 6. *If ye forsake the Lord*, etc. For willful, presumptuous sins there was no mercy. Num. 15: 30, 31; Deut. 17: 12; Ps. 19: 13. For such there is none even now. Heb. 6: 4–6; 10: 26. *He will turn and do you hurt.* Even after "he hath done you good." Indeed what could be a better measure of merited punishment than the number of daily benefits for which no thanks or service has been rendered? The fact that God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," lulls many an offender into fancied security. In their equal privileges with the just, and in their immunity for years from all punishment, they come to say: "The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." But it is leaning over a precipice against a gossamer web to suppose that, because God has not punished he will not punish, or that, because he hath done us good he will not turn and do us hurt. Benefits come to prove us. Ex. 16: 4; Deut. 8: 2. If they fail of their design, "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall he not correct; he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?"

THE WITNESS.—The people were as determined as Joshua was faithful. Their re-covenant was completed. Joshua appealed to them as being witnesses against themselves. So is a soldier's uniform "a witness against himself" that he is bound to serve his country, but it is a symbol of honor as well. The blue blouse was a thing to be proud of *except when it was seen among the ranks of the enemy!* The next witness was the "stone" set up under the oak where Jacob had hid his idols, and where Abraham had worshiped—a spot of such sacred associations that it was called "the sanctuary of the Lord." And lastly it was written in "the book of the law of God." Such "a book of remembrance" will we have to face. Happy for us if we find recorded in it a sincere covenant to serve the Lord God written over all our short-comings in the blood of Christ. As the father could not see, for the fast falling tears, that which was written in his boy's letter penned on the battle-field, on account of the drops of his blood on it, so shall the eyes of our Heavenly Father in such case be blind to all else save the precious blood of his only begotten Son.

THE RESULT.—All that generation was sealed to God! 31; Judg. 2: 7. Nowhere else is better shown the power of one single consecrated life upon its own generation than here. Joshua, by his faith, by the power of God as manifested through him, by his own steadfast uprightness and devotion, kept a whole nation from going astray! What could not God do through his people if they were all equally consecrated as Joshua!

JOSHUA'S BURIAL.—"And it came to pass after these things that Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old, and they buried him in the borders of his inheritance in Timnath-serah." How simply the Bible dismisses its great moral heroes! No imposing funeral ceremonies, no orations to departed greatness, no "resolutions" of respect—nothing but simply "died and was buried." Better than all these, however, was his last utterance: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." The ship sailed into harbor with that motto nailed to the mast! Abraham was called "The Friend of God;" Moses was known best as "The Lawgiver," but this man was most fitly described as "The Servant of the Lord." Better epitaph could no man have.

Points for Arrows.

1.—God is entitled to our love and our service. Mark 10:45; John 3:16; Gal. 1:3, 4; 3:13; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 6:11, 12; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19.

2.—He desires from us, however, nothing not willingly given. If we serve him at all, our service is not of bondage, but of freedom. Ex. 25:2; 35:5; Mark 12:41–44; 2 Cor. 8:11, 12; 9:7; John 15:15; Acts 15:10; Rom. 6:18; Gal. 4:6, 7; 5:1.

3.—It is not possible to serve him with a divided affection. Christ and Belial can not dwell in the same heart. Matt. 6:24; 2 Cor. 6:14–18; Gal. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:10; Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15; 3:14–17.

4.—And when we are the Lord's he expects us to put away all our idols—all that defiles. Gen. 35:2; Acts 15:20; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 4:9; Col. 3:8, 9; Tit. 3:8; Heb. 12:1; 1 Pet. 1:14; 2:11.

5.—What a host of witnesses there are, whether our covenants be with, or against, Jehovah! If *with*, then there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. (Luke 15:7, 10; 11–32.) 1.—*God Himself:* Ps. 50:7; Jer. 29:23; Micah 1:2; Mal. 3:5; Rom. 1:9; 1 Thess. 2:10. 2.—*Christ:* Rev. 1:5. 3.—*The Spirit:* Rom. 8:16; 1 John 4:13; 5:10. 4.—*Our own consciences:* John 8:9; Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:12; 1 John 3:20. 5.—*Ourselves:* Is. 44:9; Matt. 23:31. 6.—*Our words:* Matt. 13:37. "A great cloud:" 1 Thess. 2:10; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 12:1. "The book:" Rev. 20:12.

6.—We are the "servants" of those whom we obey. John 8:34; Rom. 6:16, 20; 2 Pet. 2:19.

HYMN.

To-day the Saviour calls;
Ye wanderers come;
Oh, ye benighted souls,
Why longer roam!

The Spirit calls to-day;
Yield to his power;
Oh, grieve him not away;
'Tis Mercy's hour.

BLACKBOARD.

If it seem EVIL
Unto you to
SERVE THE LORD,
Choose ye this day
WHOM YE WILL SERVE.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Review sufficiently so that the class will understand the force of Joshua's appeal to the Israelites to serve the Lord "in sincerity and truth." Show them that God had done so many things for that people that he had a *right* to expect that they would love and serve him. Get them, then, to tell over what God has done for them. Probably they will omit the suffering of Christ in their stead. Call their attention to this as greater than all they have mentioned. Then ask if God has not proved his right to *their* love and service.

2.—Read the people's reply. 16–18. Could any idols that they call gods have so helped the Jews? Do you think any one or any thing could help you as God does? If the Israelites did not choose to serve God, Joshua tells them they must serve—what? Why, the "gods" their fathers served, or the "gods of the Amorites"! And they were mere images that had ears but could not hear, eyes but could not see, etc. If *you* don't serve God *whom will you serve?*

3. Joshua, in reply, tells them that they *can not* serve God. Couldn't they serve him? Could *if they wanted to.* But could they serve him and worship their own gods at the same time? Read Matt. 6:24. Can you serve God and the devil also? Do you think he will be satisfied with you if you try to be good—only on Sundays? How much of your heart does he want? Yes, all of

it, because he wants to dwell in a *clean* heart. You would not like to live in a house with a family that made it perfectly filthy. But that is the way the devil does with our hearts. God can't dwell in them if the devil does. Nor can the devil dwell in them if God be there.

4.—The people were resolved to serve the Lord and put away all their idols. Joshua made them "witnesses" (explain) of this fact, and also he set a stone up under an oak to remind them of it. When you try hard to serve God who do you think sees you and are glad of it? Read Luke 15: 7, 10. Also read and explain Heb. 12: 1.

5.—Tell of Joshua's death — his age — place of burial — his last noble speech: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Tell the result of his appeal to the Jews — the whole nation kept steadfast. That is what one man did. But a little child can do a good deal, too. What?

HYMN.

Take my heart, O Lord, and keep it,
Drive the Evil One away;
Make it sweet, and pure, and holy,
So that Thou in it canst stay.

I am thine — all thine — forever;
Thou hast purchased — made me free;
Henceforth shall my heart be ever
Dwelling-place for only thee.

BLACKBOARD.

No Room in my Heart
FOR SATAN,
Or, no Room in my Heart
FOR GOD.
One must have it all.
WHICH SHALL IT BE?

LESSON XV.— APRIL 11, 1875.—THE PROMISE BROKEN.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Judges 2: 11-16. Commit 11-16; Primary Verse 16.

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim:
12 And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.
13 And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.
14 And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.
15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.
16 Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel."—Ps. 106: 13.

TOPIC.—No Freedom without the Lord.

HOME READINGS.

M. Lev. 26: 1-46.... ...The Penalty of Idolatry.
T. Num. 25: 1-18.....The Penalty Enforced.
W. Deut. 6: 1-25 .....Warned against Idolatry.
Th. Deut. 7: 1-26.....Told how to Guard Against it.
F. Deut. 8: 1-20.....Warning Repeated.
S. Deut. 29: 9-29.....Still Another given.
S. Deut. 31: 16-22.....Their Idolatry Foretold.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—The Israelites were commanded utterly to destroy the nations that inhabited Canaan, so that they might not be corrupted by them. After the death of Joshua did they show any desire to do this? 1: 1. Who was first to go up against them? 1: 2. Now see in verses 21, 27–36 of the same chapter how their zeal all died away, and they left the idolaters in the land contrary to what God had commanded. Could the Jews have driven them out? The trouble is they did not try.

2.—Then came an angel of the Lord from "Gilgal to Bochim." It was at or near Gilgal that Joshua saw the "Captain of the Lord's host." Josh. 5: 13. When it says that the angel "came up from Gilgal to Bochim," it means probably that this is the same one that Joshua saw at Gilgal. What was his message? 1–3. What was the effect? 4. The meaning of "Bochim" is *weepers*. How long did the people remain faithful? 7.

3.—What did the children of Israel do? 11. Why did they do that? 10. What did they do beside "doing evil in the sight of the Lord"? 12. What were the names of two of the gods they worshiped? 13. Baal was the supreme male deity of the Canaanites, and Ashtaroth was the supreme female deity. Baal was the "sun god," and Ashtaroth represented the moon or stars.

4.—What happened then? 14, 15. Had they ever been told this would take place if they forsook the Lord? Deut. 28: 30; 29: 22–26; 31: 16. How greatly they were to be distressed you can find out in Deut. 28: 50–53. All the promises had been fulfilled — now, when there was such occasion for it, should not the threats also be carried out? When they were obedient they had realized Lev. 26: 7, 8. Now when they were rebellious they must experience Lev. 26: 17, 37.

5.—Did God let them utterly go? 16. Did they then remain true to him? 17. Every time that they returned to the false gods what happened? 19. Then what did God do? 20, 21. Why did he leave the nations there to vex them? 22. Had he ever "proved" them in a similar way? Deut. 8: 2. See also Ex. 16: 4. What are blessings and trials sent to us for?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE BOOK. — The Book of Judges chronicles another Fall of Man. The Book of Joshua tells of a people that obediently followed the Lord, growing so in strength and grace, that, finally, their aged leader, jealous as he was for the honor of God, could think of no better exhortation than to enjoin them to "cleave unto the Lord as ye have done unto this day." And it was said of that generation by the author of the book of Judges that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel." And yet their immediate successors fell from this high estate. They fell, and fell often — each time lower than before. 2: 19. Their repentings and returnings were of short duration and were compelled by the bitterness of their bondage rather than by sorrow for sin. "*Old* Israel," it has been well said, "wept when it heard the preaching of repentance; *New* Israel weeps only when it feels the sword of the enemy." It is a sad record of man's weaknesses and failures and of God's constancy and mercy, and illustrates in all its fullness the wonderful truth uttered by Paul: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Sad as the record is, it is, however, a complete picture of the life of the Christian — falling often into sin, as often repenting; yielding again to the enticements of the world, but never left by the Spirit of God, who follows him by punishments as well as by blessings.

Hitherto the history of Israel has been, as it were, the history of one man. The history of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, of Moses, or of Joshua has stood for that of all the children of Israel. What the people did was of secondary importance to what they did. Now we have a history of the people themselves; "Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the Lord," etc. It was no longer one man, but many — a whole nation.

When the book was written is not definitely known. That it was written during the days of some upright king is evident from the frequent remark, made as a reason for such woeful lapses into idolatry: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that

which was right in his own eyes." Scholarship has been able to do no more than to say that it must have been written after the great victory of Samuel over the Philistines and about the time of David. Tradition ascribes the authorship to Samuel. The probabilities favor that or the supposition that it was written by some younger prophet under his direction. The book has three natural divisions. Chapters I. and II. speak of the condition of Israel and the causes of its misfortunes. III. to XVI. is a record of its backslidings and recoveries—of its being brought into bondage and its deliverances therefrom—of sin and redemption. XVII. to XXI. are a sort of an appendix, and give an account of the worship of images by the Ephraimite Micah, and the infamous conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeah and the war that grew out of it.

INTRODUCTORY.—In order clearly to comprehend our present lesson it is absolutely necessary carefully to read the first chapter, and to bear in mind that the Israelites had been expressly enjoined utterly to destroy and drive out the Canaanites. Num. 33: 52; Deut. 7; 2. They were not to be driven out all at once "lest the land become desolate and the beast of the field multiply against thee," but were to be expelled "little by little." Ex. 23: 29, 30; Deut. 7: 22. This accounts for the fact that Joshua carried the war of extermination no farther than he did. But no covenant was to be made with them; no intermarriages were to be allowed; all their idols were to be destroyed, and the process of extirpation was to continue, though it was to be gradual, until it was entirely complete. Num. 33: 52; Deut. 7: 2–5; 12: 2, 3. After the death of Joshua the people were zealous to carry out this design. Their first enquiry of the Lord *made immediately* after his death, so the verb indicates, was: "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?" That indicated the right sort of spirit.. Judah, to whom pre-eminence was always given, was indicated as the first. (With relation to such pre-eminence see: Gen. 49: 10; Num. 10: 14; 34: 19; Josh. 15: 1; Rev. 5: 5.) The first chapter shows that so long as the children of Israel were obedient and faithful so long they overcame the enemy. It shows, too, that believing children help one another, and in their union are victorious. But cessation of obedience is cessation of victory, and a prophecy of bondage. First the children of Benjamin, loving too much their ease, did not drive out the Jebusites; then Manasseh followed their bad example, and Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, etc., prove themselves equally weak. The indictment against them is found in the 28th verse: "And it came to pass when Israel was strong that they put the Canaanites to tribute and did not utterly drive them out." The devil offered them a bribe to let him remain, and they took it. Taking a bribe from him is a virtual sale of one's self. So the Israelites found. They took the tribute money and lost their own liberty.

Chapter 2: 1–10 records the rebuke of the Angel of the Lord for their laxity, and their repentance for their disobedience. Verse 7 tells how long this better spirit prevailed. This is the last we see of the generation that "had seen all the works of the Lord that he did for Israel." Now we turn to contemplate the acts of one "which knew not the Lord."

THE APOSTASY.—First, "*they did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim.*" They did not absolutely give up worshiping God, but tried to serve two masters. But this could not be, so "*they forsook the Lord God of their fathers which brought them out of the land of Egypt.*" How often is this tender refrain uttered—spoken as if the mere mention ought to bring them, self-reproachful and repentant, to the feet of their Redeemer, and as if the manifestation of such divine love and power and favor made their falling away utterly incomprehensible! But how often could such a reproach be uttered of them for whom Christ died, and yet who forsake him

entirely! ***Followed the gods of the people round about.*** Lost their superiority and independence. They began by tolerating; then looked on; then became followers. See the three steps mentioned in Ps. 1:1: "Walketh in the counsel of the ungodly; standeth in the way of sinners; sitteth in the seat of the scornful." ***And they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtaroth!*** That is the climax. Not only served other gods, but the worst of the other gods! Read Jer. 2:11–13.

BAAL AND ASHTAROTH.—Baal was the supreme male deity, and Ashtaroth the supreme female deity of the Canaanites. Baal was the sun-god and Ashtaroth was worshiped either as Venus or the Moon. The worship of both is very ancient. We read of the worship of Baal by the Moabites and their Midianite allies in Num. 22:41. By it the Israelites had before this been led away. Num. 25:3–18. Baalim is the plural form of Baal, and is used because this god had many varying, local reproductions, each one having special local characteristics expressed in its additional qualifying name, of which Baal-zephon, Baal-peor, and Baal-zebub are examples. Its worship was long continued. 2 K. 17:16. Was marked by much pomp and ceremony; temples were erected for it; its images seem to have been numerous (1 K. 16:32; 2 K. 10:26; 11:18); its worship was celebrated in groves and on lofty eminences (1 K. 18:19, 20); had a numerous priesthood; burned incense (Jer. 7:9); sacrificed children (Jer. 19:5); priests danced around the altar and cut themselves with knives (1 K. 18:26–28); was attended with licentious rites. Num. 25:6–8. Baal probably appears in the Babylonian Bel, or Belus (Is. 46:1), and Ashtaroth in the Assyrian "Ishtar" and in the Greek and Roman "Astarte." She had a temple at Askelon (1 Sam. 31:10), and her worship was evidently distinguished by the impurity of its rites. 1 K. 11:7; 2 K. 23:13. In the worship of Baal, the sun, and of Ashtaroth, the moon, that had come to pass against which the Lord had specially warned them (Deut. 4:15–19), and concerning which their fathers had been foretold. Deut. 31:16–22.

THE CONSEQUENCES.—***They provoked the Lord to anger.*** First they did that which was "evil" in his sight; then they "provoked him to anger;" his anger became hot; he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers and sold them into the hands of their enemies. The climax of their apostasy had its anti-climax in the rising wrath of God. The consequences of such a defection had been faithfully pointed out to them. Deut. 4:25–28; 28:20; 29:18–28; 31:16, 17. Every promise had been fulfilled—now they were realizing that God was as faithful in the fulfillment of his threats as his promises. "They could no longer stand before their enemies." It was no longer Lev. 26:7, 8, but Lev. 26:17, 37. They became the property of those over whom their fathers so readily triumphed. It was not necessary for them to go to Egypt to experience its bondage. They bowed themselves unto strange gods—presented their necks for the yoke and it came to them. Israel had to learn that it was "free only by law, and without it was a servant." Without God they had "no basis of nationality." He made them free and established them as a nation. By bitter experience they were bringing home to themselves the fact that to serve Him meant freedom—to serve other gods meant slavery.

THE MERCY OF GOD.—That was as wonderful as their falling away. They were "greatly distressed" and it is our distresses that make powerful appeals for us unto the Lord. Ps. 107:1–30. He had heard their cry in Egypt (Ex. 2:24; 6:5) and it was not in his nature not to heed it now. The continuance of God's anger, the same as his mercy, is conditional. For calamities as well as blessings are sent "to prove" whether we will keep the way of the Lord or no. 21, 22; Deut. 8:2. When they accomplish their end then does he make his face again to shine upon us. And to

the Israelites it was so promised. Lev. 26: 39–44; Deut. 4: 26–31. What a record of wonderful patience is the balance of the chapter, and when, finally, it is said that God gave them up to their own devices and would not drive out the nations from the land, his tenderness for his people is still indicated in his not abandoning them, and in his taking such a course only "to prove them." Very readily they might infer, as Gideon later actually did infer, from the distressful character of their altered circumstances, that God had "forsaken" them. But now we know how faithful he was to them all the time, and that knowledge ought to prevent a similar wrong inference on our part when we are encompassed by troubles.

JUDGES.—Originally Moses exercised all judicial functions. Ex. 18: 15, 16. The duties, however, being too burdensome, were committed to trustworthy men. Ex. 18: 17–26; Deut. 1: 12–16. Afterward he enjoined the appointment of judges throughout all the tribes in every city. Deut. 16: 18. Their jurisdiction extended even to cases of life and death. Deut. 17: 1–12. Resistance to them was punishable with death. Deut. 17: 12. When it is said that "the Lord raised up judges" it is meant that he exalted special ones of these local judges into an authority extended far beyond their territorial limits. None of them ever commanded as did Moses or Joshua. The government was a theocracy and its oracle was at Shiloh. It was at this place that the will of God was promulgated, and here it was that the children of Israel "enquired of the Lord." The office of judge was not hereditary, and so all the power and influence that he acquired was only temporary, because vested in no successor. They were moral heroes rising above the corruptions of their times, and, by force of their individual characters, leading back their race to the worship of the true God. Their acts show what men can do when consecrated and God-inspired, even when acting single-handed and alone. The history of these times brings out with especial clearness the fact that unfaithfulness to God begets a nation of cowards, and fidelity to him is the mother of heroes. No man can stand unflinchingly before men who is not upright before God.

Warning Truths.

1.—Every time we fall, we fall lower than before. We must either do better or do worse. 19; Jer. 7: 26; 16: 12; Matt. 12: 43–45; John 5: 14; 2 Tim. 3: 13; 1 Pet. 2: 20–22.

2.—God does not demand that we make conquest of ourselves all at once; but "little by little" the enemies of our peace are to be driven out of our hearts. But that is not to be construed into a privilege of inaction. There can be no compact, no truce, no compromise. "Little by little" means "year by year, month by month, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment." Gen. 17: 1; Deut. 18: 13; Matt. 5: 48; 2 Cor. 11: 12; 13: 9, 11; Phil. 3: 14; Col. 1: 28; Heb. 12: 1; Jas. 1: 4.

3.—Make no terms with the devil. No one ever got the better of him. Even the Saviour would not trust himself to make a bargain with him. Matt. 4: 1–11; 2 Cor. 2: 11; 11: 14; Eph. 4: 27; 6: 11; 1 Tim. 3: 7; 2 Tim. 2: 26; Jas. 4: 7; 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9.

4.—Let us all thoroughly understand that when we are "forsaken of the Lord" it is only because we have forsaken him. With him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. 1 Sam. 12: 22; 15: 29; 2 Chron. 24: 20; Neh. 9: 30, 31; Ps. 9: 10; Is. 41: 17; 44: 21; 49: 14, 15; Jer. 51: 5; Mal. 3: 6; Matt. 7: 11; Heb. 13: 5.

5.—Do not regard the threats in the Bible as idle utterances, and the promises only as true. God is faithful in *all* that he hath said. Job 36: 17; Is. 40: 8; Eze. 12: 25; 24: 14; Amos. 9: 1–5; Matt. 5: 18; Mark 13: 31; Luke 16: 17.

6.—"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28: 13; Job. 33: 27, 28; Ps. 32: 5; Luke 15: 18; 1 John 1: 9.

7—Oh that the world might understand

that with the Lord only there is liberty, and that sin brings bondage. Ps. 119:45; John 8:32,36; Rom. 6:14,18,22; 8:15,20,21; 1 Cor. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 5:1,13; 4:3,9; Heb. 2:15; Jas. 1:25; 2:12; 2 Pet. 2:19.

HYMN.

Like him whose fetters dropped away
When light shone o'er his prison,
My soul, now touched with mercy's ray,
Hath from its chains arisen.

And shall the soul Thou bid'st be free
Return to bondage? Never!
Thee, O my God, and only Thee
I live for, now and ever.

BLACKBOARD.

In CHRIST is
LIBERTY.
In SIN is
BONDAGE.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The Israelites no longer had any Moses or Joshua to lead them. After Joshua's death they resolved to go forward and drive out the wicked people who remained in the land. They commenced very zealously to do this, but just as some little children eagerly begin a hard job soon tire of it, so did they. They did not drive the wicked people out, but made them give money so that they might stay in.

2.—This is just what they had been commanded not to do. They were to make no agreement with those wicked nations, just as God does not want you to have anything to do with sin. They were to drive them out "little by little." You have evil passions in your hearts that are your enemies. They tempt you to lie, to steal, to be angry, to be disobedient, and though you can not drive them out all at once, God expects you to drive them all out "little by little," by keeping at it, year by year, month by month, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment. The Israelites made their great mistake by taking money from their enemies and letting them remain. You must not do as they did. If anything you like to eat or like to do tempts you to do wrong, don't take that bribe and say: "I'll do it just this once," for that leads to doing wrong all the time.

3.—And that is just what the Israelites found. They let their enemies stay in their land. Their enemies worshiped idols. The Israelites looked on and saw them do it. At first they were horrified by it, but before long they became accustomed to it, and then in a short time they worshiped idols themselves. That shows how dangerous it is to stand and look on when anything wrong is being done. Many a boy has become a drunkard by standing by and "looking on" when other folks were drinking.

4.—The names of the gods that the Israelites were led to worship were "Baal and Ashtaroth"—pretty hard names to remember. (Write them on the board.) Baal was the "Sun" god, and Ashtaroth the "Moon" god. So the Israelites came to worship the sun and the moon instead of the real God who made them both. There is no telling, you see, where a sin will end. There were awful things done in worshiping them. One of the things that was done was to kill little children and offer them up as sacrifices. Does the real God want children killed? How do you know? But they not only worshiped idols; they lost their liberty, also, and became the slaves of their enemies. Those who give way to sin become the slaves of sin.

5.—But God heard their groanings in their bondage, and he sent men called judges to deliver them. You would think that when he did this they would serve him. Then they became worse than before. If we do not become better we become worse. This continued until finally God said he would stop driving out their enemies for them. You see that there comes a time when God will not help us if we will not ourselves try to resist evil.

HYMN.

Oh watch and fight and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down,
Thine arduous work will not be done
Till thou obtain thy crown.

BLACKBOARD.

Fight with Sin
ALWAYS,
Every Day, Every Hour,
EVERY MOMENT.

LESSON XVI.—APRIL 18, 1875.—THE CALL OF GIDEON.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Judges 6: 11-18. Commit 12-18; Primary Verse, 16.

11 And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

12 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor.

13 And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

15 And he said unto him, O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

16 And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17 And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."—MATT. 28: 20.

TOPIC.—"Not many mighty, not many noble are called."

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. 12: 1-18.....The Call of Abraham.
T. Ex. 3: 1-15.....The Call of Moses.
W. 1 Sam. 3: 1-20.....The Call of Samuel.
Th. 1 Sam. 16: 1-13.....The Call of David.
F. 1 K. 19: 1-21.....The Call of Elisha.
S. Acts 9: 1-22.....The Call of Saul.
S. Is. 55: 1-13.....The Universal Call.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—Who now were rulers over Israel? 2. Of whom were the Midianites descendants? Gen. 25: 1, 2. Where did they live? Num. 22: 1. Had the Israelites ever fought them? Num. 31: 7. Now the Israelites were conquered by them. What did the Midianites and their allies do to the crops? 3-5. What was the result? 6. Where were the Israelites compelled to live? 2. Were they "mighty men of valor" any more? Why was it that they had lost their power to overcome? 1.

2.—When the people were sore distressed what did they do? 7. Did the Lord answer? What did this prophet say? 8–10. Did he show them a way out of bondage?

3.—What is told in verse 11? When the angel came and sat under a tree he appeared to Gideon like a man only—one who had stopped to rest. Gideon was threshing "by the wine-press" instead of on an open threshing-floor (a threshing-floor was a circular hard piece of ground) for fear—of what? What does the angel tell him? 12. What is Gideon's reply? 13. Look at Deut. 31: 17 and see if you think he answered wisely. You must bear in mind all the time that, though Gideon says "my Lord" he thinks he is talking to a traveler. Perhaps when the "Lord looked upon him" (14) and told him to go in his might and save Israel he may have felt then that it was no man that was talking with him. Especially when he added: "Have not I sent thee?" What was Gideon's reply to this? 15. His reply shows that Gideon saw that if anything was to be done the Lord must do it all. Did God show that he was willing to do it all? 16. Is he as willing to do as much for us now?

4.—What did Gideon want? 17. What do you think he wanted the sign for? Gideon *had* begun to think that this might be a celestial visitor, and he wanted to make sure by some miraculous sign. That he sought for in the meal that he placed before him. Angels, he thought, do not eat food. If he eats then he is a man—perhaps a prophet, but still a man. If he does not eat then he must be an angel. Read 18–21 and see what the angel did do. Was Gideon then convinced that he was an angel? 22. How did it affect him? What was God's reply? 23. What did Gideon then do? 24. What did he call his altar? What is the meaning of the name he gave to it?

5.—What did God require of Gideon that same night? 25, 26. His father then was an idolater! Did the Lord want Gideon to commence worshiping him in secret? Where was it to be done? 26. How was it done? 27, 28. What was the effect? 30–35. You see that Gideon's conduct made his father also serve the Lord, and rallied around him an army of his brethren. That is what one decided good man can do. Read 36–40 and see what other two signs were asked for by Gideon and given to him.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE SITUATION.—Alas, how are the mighty fallen! Those who had brushed off their enemies as though they had been the down of feathers now hide from them in dens and caves. They were not permitted to gather for themselves the fruits of their labor. As had been foretold, they were sowing their seed in vain, for their enemies were eating the harvests. Lev. 26: 17; Deut. 28: 30. But they had sown evil, and so were reaping a harvest of evils—had sown the wind and were reaping the whirlwind. Looking out upon their own utter desolation, "their eyes might tell them what their souls had done." Having rejected the protection of God, the dens of the mountains became their insufficient hiding places. Verses 1–6 tell the pitiful pass to which they had come. They were subject to the Midianites, a Bedawin, predatory tribe, whose home was east of Moab, allied with other trans-Jordanic tribes and the Amalekites. 3. The Midianites were descended from Abraham and Keturah, Gen. 25: 2. To them Moses fled when he had killed the Egyptian, and among them he married. Ex. 2: 15, 21. In their desert wanderings the Israelites had fought and defeated them, killing all the males. Num. 31. Now, after a lapse of two-hundred years, reinforced, at first, probably, by other wandering bands of their tribe, they had grown again to be formidable. The Israelites do not seem to have been subject to any systematic rule under these rude conquerors. Such a roving, undisciplined tribe, subject, themselves, to no law, would not be likely to impose any regular exactions upon the Israelites. They preferred, rather, to wander, "as grasshoppers for multitude," here and there, as attracted by fresh pastures, or hope of plunder. And these raids were as much to be dreaded as the swarm of locusts to which they were likened, for they left nothing behind them. "And Israel was greatly impoverished."

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES.—The Israelites had been subject to Chusan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia (3: 8), for eight years; to Eglon, king of the Moabites (3: 14), for eighteen years; and to Jabin, king of the Canaanites (4: 3), for twenty years. From Chusan-rishathaim they had been delivered by Othniel, the younger brother of Caleb

(3:10); from Eglon by Ehud, the left-handed (3:15–30); and from Jabin by Deborah and Barak. 4:24. Their intervals of "rest" had been forty, eighty and forty years respectively. Each time the term and rigor of their service, it will be noticed, were increased, until it is said of Jabin "he mightily oppressed Israel." Bad as their condition was under him, they had come now to a plight still worse, for, under Jabin, Deborah, when she judged Israel, "dwelt under a palm tree." And though then, "the highways were unoccupied and the travelers walked through by-ways," yet Israel at least lived above ground and had sustenance enough. Evil doing had at last so degraded them that they had lost all resemblance to their heroic fathers, and now burrowed, like timid rabbits, beneath the earth. It was from the wrath of God they were hiding; no wonder their courage was gone.

THE CRY AND ITS ANSWER.—6–10. *The children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites.* Israel was the Prodigal Son. In the midst of his desolation, stripped of all his habiliments of glory; when even the husks that the swine did eat would have been welcome, thoughts came of that beneficent Father who had so tenderly cared for his people, so that even in their desert wanderings they had wanted for nothing. And the Father heard that cry. No matter how deep the depths, no repentant Prodigal ever cries unheard. Wonderful how many times he heard and answered! Well could Christ tell his disciples to forgive seventy times seven times, for had not his Father forgiven in like manner? God sent his prophet to his afflicted people. And what did he say? Apparently not a single word of comfort or of promise. God brought you forth out of Egypt; drove out the inhabitants of your promised land; told you not to fear the gods of the Amorites—"but ye have not obeyed my voice." That was the substance of his message. Guilt would see in this only an affirmation of the justness of their punishment—true repentance alone would catch the glimmer of hope that it was meant to convey. Guilt only must have been its interpreter, for there is no record that the people were at all heartened by it, or turned at all from their idols.

THE CALL.—11–16. There must have been at least one, however, that pondered these words. And that was Gideon. Else, would not the angel of the Lord have visited him. No revival comes anywhere except as some one ponders the word of the Lord and longs and prays for its coming. And here was about to be a great revival; and how can we account for the angel's coming to this unknown young man except as his heart was full of misery for the condition of Israel, and of prayer for their relief. God's first message in any place is to the one who is wrestling in prayer; and so the Lord came to Gideon. It was the Lord himself who came(14); "the angel of the Lord" being used after the manner with which the teachers have already become familiar. He came in the guise of "a poor wayfaring man" who rested himself under the oak. *The Lord is with thee.* Ah, yes, and, O Gideon, *how near!* Near as he is to us often when we least suspect it. Near as he is to every sinner who struggles against the evil within himself and longs for a Saviour. Gideon's answer shows he has been thinking. It can not be; else all this would not have befallen us. Deut. 13:17. It is something he has said over and over to himself. *And the Lord looked upon him.* So our Lord looked upon Peter, and the thrice-perjured coward became a hero. *Go in this thy might.* Gideon, in response to that look, had felt stirring within himself a new and wondrous power. And when his visitor says: "Have not I sent thee," it begins to dawn in his mind that he is talking with no mortal. Still, he is not sure. His position precludes the idea of his being a leader. He is the youngest of the most insignificant house in Manasseh. It is too large a leap—from the

bottom to the top of the ladder. *Wherewith shall I save Israel?* therefore, is a very natural question. His is the unbelief of humility — not a lack of faith in God. He does not doubt the power of God, but whether God has chosen *him* for such a service. It is himself he distrusts—not God. Such doubts God is patient with, and so gives him another assurance—that he shall smite the Midianites as though they all were one man.

THE SIGN.—18–24. Gideon asks for a sign—a miraculous proof is what he wants—from the one who speaks to him so authoritatively. He proposes to himself a very simple test. According to the popular belief of his times angels do not eat food. He therefore proposes to set before his visitor some cakes and some meat, which may be either a meal or a meat-offering, according as his guest is mortal or immortal. If he partakes, then, though he may be a prophet, he surely is a man. The simple device is tried. The cakes, the meat, and the broth are refused as food, but accepted as an offering. They are placed upon a rock, and the visitor stretches forth his rod and fire comes out of it and consumes them. In that marvelous moment Gideon's doubts are solved. The wayfaring man has become glorified in his eyes. "*Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.*" It was the common belief that no man could look upon the Lord and live. But, from the now unseen Deity comes the assurance: "Fear not, thou shalt not die." And then peace entered into and took full possession of his soul, so that he builded an altar and called it *Jehovah-shalem*—the Peace of God.

THE INSTRUCTIONS.— 25, 26. They came "the same night"— in a dream. Prompt— must begin serving the Lord at home, *and now*. Throw down your father's idol and cut down the grove planted in its honor. The hardest place in the world to commence a Christian life is at home; but that is just the place to begin. And then this new convert not only had to pull down Baal's altar, but he had to build an altar to the true God "*on the top of this rock.*" He could not begin his new life secretly. And further, he was to offer sacrifices upon it. That was calling upon a new convert to testify pretty soon. The sooner the better, however, in every case. By delay one seems to lose the power of testifying. Our churches are filled with silent worshipers who might be jubilant witnesses for God had they listened from the first to his voice speaking within them, and, like Gideon, testified immediately and conspicuously before men.

THEIR FULFILLMENT.—27–32. There was no delay on the part of Gideon. He did what he was to do by night, not cravenly, however, but wisely, fearing that he would be hindered in his purpose by his father's household and by the people in the city. He was bound to succeed, and was not going to act rashly even though he had a "*Thus Saith the Lord*" behind him. The result proved his wisdom, for, even as it was, the news flew rapidly, and "early in the morning" came the affronted, angry worshipers of Baal, demanding that Joash should surrender his son that he might be put to death. It shows the degradation to which Israel had fallen, that such a demand could be made with the expectation that it would be complied with. But Joash that night had become a convert also, and his reply is both bold and subtle — both a threat and an argument. The threat is evident; the argument is: If Baal is a god, as is claimed, it is a presumptuous insult to him — one worthy of death — for you to interfere, unasked, in his behalf. Wait till the morning, and if he be a god he will avenge himself. To interfere for him now is to deny his deity. The argument and the threat together proved effective. Then Joash called Gideon *Jerub-baal*— "Let Baal contend with him." The name clung even to his memory. 1 Sam. 12:11. The result of that one night's work was that he was called by a name that showed the utter imbecility of the

god that was so feared by Israel. That alone was honor enough, but, in addition to that, by his brave stand *he had won over his own father*. What would half-way measures have accomplished as compared with this!

THE PREPARATION.—34–40. Then the allied tribes were gathered together and pitched in the valley of Jezreel or Esdrælon. Whether they were gathered to avenge this insult to their god the inspired narrative does not say. They may have been only on one of their predatory incursions, of which Gideon took advantage in striking them when they were all together. *But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon and he blew a trumpet and Abi-ezer was gathered after him.* Abi-ezer was his own family. Then others rallied around him. The insignificant young man—the youngest one of the poorest house in all Manasseh—had come to be a mighty power—a recognized leader. One faithful, God-obeying man can inspire many others if only "the Spirit of the Lord come upon him."

In assembling his army he has, so far, gone upon the strength of the assurance that he had received under the oak. But now doubts came again, and, as before, of himself. His trouble is to know whether God will save Israel by *his* hand. One may well doubt whether he is called to high positions—never as to low ones. He asks another sign. Dew comes on the fleece, and the ground is dry in answer to his prayer. But it occurs to him that this may come about from natural causes alone. A fleece will absorb a great deal of dew, and that would remain in it while that on the ground evaporates. So he reasons: Now if the reverse of this be done then there can be no room for doubt. The reverse *was* done and henceforth Gideon goes forth panoplied in faith.

Winnowed Truths.

1.—There is nothing more certain than that as we sow we shall also reap. Job. 4:8; Hos. 8:7; 10:12; Ps. 41:1–3; Prov. 11:26–31; 19:17; 22:9; 2 Cor. 9:9; Gal. 6:7, 8.

2.—Courage is born of an upright heart, while fear is the offspring of a startled conscience. Lev. 26:17; Ps. 55:5; Prov. 28:1; Is. 66:4; 2 Cor. 7:5, 11; Rev. 21:8.

3.—How quick is God to hear the cry of our distress; how great is his mercy; how ready he is to forgive. 2 Sam. 14:14; Ps. 107:10–15; Prov. 28:13; Lam. 3:33; Ezek. 18:20–22, 31, 32; 33:11; Hos. 11:8; Luke 15:3–32; John 3:15, 16; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9.

4.—The Lord is very nigh to those that call upon him. He *comes* to those that seek him. Ps. 34:18; 85:9; 119:51; 145:18; Eph. 2:13; Matt. 18:20; Luke 19:10; John 14:23; 20:19; Rev. 3:20.

5.—And how often He has unexpectedly come, and come in the guise of a wayfaring man. Gen. 18:1, 2; 32:24; Josh. 5:13; Matt. 10:40, 42; 18:5; Luke 24:13–16; John 4:6.

6.—Men can not over-estimate their own weakness. The trouble is that, like Gideon, they are so slow to realize that God is willing to help *them*. Ps. 27:14; 84:5–7; Is. 40:29–31; 45:24; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 12:5–7; 2 Cor. 12:9, 10; Eph. 3:16; 6:10; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:17.

7.—Begin the Christian life just where you are—and NOW! If you do not allow the obstacles around you to overcome you, you will overcome them. Matt. 8:21, 22; 10:37–39; Luke 14:18–24; 2 Cor. 6:2; Heb. 12:25.

HYMN.

Sin, o'er sense so softly stealing,
Doubt, that would my strength impair,
Hence at once from life and feeling—
Now my cross I gladly bear.

Up to conflict! From thee shaking
Off the bonds of sin, be brave;
Give thyself to prayer and waking,
That you some fainting hearts may save.

BLACKBOARD.

God is calling YOU
to serve him.

When? NOW. Where?
At HOME—at SCHOOL,
EVERYWHERE.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The Israelites had at last come to a very bad pass. They had been conquered by one king, and then another, and still another. By each one they were treated very cruelly. God permitted them to be conquered and so treated because they would worship idols. But whenever they turned from their idols and cried unto him he delivered them. Since the time spoken of in our last lesson he had delivered them three times. If they had only served him, they never would have been overcome again. But they did not. Once more they worshiped idols, and God gave them into the hands of the Midianites. By them they were greatly afflicted. (Tell what their afflictions were. 1–6.)

2.—When the people were so afflicted they cried again unto the Lord. And he heard them. First he sent his prophet unto them telling them that they had done wrong, so that they might repent. But they did not appear to listen to him, and then *the Lord came himself.* How much God must have thought of his people to come down from heaven just to deliver them. How much must he love us all, for he not only came down from heaven, but *died* for us that we might be delivered from our sins.

3.—He came down and appeared to Gideon when he was threshing wheat by a wine-press, out of sight of the Midianites, as a poor "wayfaring man"—a traveler, and sat near him under an oak. Gideon was the youngest son of the poorest house in his tribe. Yet God selected him to be the leader. It was hard for Gideon to believe that God had chosen *him* to be the leader, because he was so poor and so young. At first he thought God was nobody but a traveler who had stopped to rest. But when he turned and looked upon him, that made him think that perhaps he was not a man.

4.—Tell about the sign—what it was—the manner of its manifestation—how it solved all Gideon's doubts—the altar that he built—the instructions he received the same night—how he carried them out—the result—the anger of the Baal-worshipers—the conversion of his father—the assembling of the people—and the two signs.

HYMN.

I am very weak and small,
What can I, so little, do?
Comes the answer from the Lord:
"I have use for even you."

Use for you as well as men;
That is why he gave you hands,
Gave you eyes—made swift your feet,
Told you what were his commands.

BLACKBOARD.

GOD used GIDEON,
THE YOUNGEST SON
OF THE
POOREST HOUSE.
HE can use YOU.

LESSON XVII.—APRIL 25, 1875.—GIDEON'S ARMY.

SCRIPTURE LESSON.—Judges 7 : 1-8. Commit 1-8; Primary Verse, 2.

1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the Lord said unto Gideon, the people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few."—1 Sam. 14:6.

TOPIC.—Perfect Faith gives Perfect Victory.

HOME READINGS.

M.	Deut.	20 : 1- 9	Cowards Always to go Home.
T.	2 Ch.	14 : 1-15	A Million put to Flight.
W.	1 Sam.	14 : 1-20	An Army overcome by Two.
Th.	2 K.	6 : 1-23	An Army overcome by One.
F.	2 Ch.	20 : 14-25	Destroyed by Thine Own Hands.
S.	2 K.	7 : 1- 7	Routed by Imagination.
S.	Is.	9 : 1- 7	The One that shall Conquer All.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1.—The Armies.—Read Judges 6: 34, 35 and see if you can tell who composed Gideon's army. Read the third verse of the lesson to find out how many men were in it. The number of the Midianites is given in chapter 8: 10. Do you think any general nowadays would like to fight if he had such odds against him?

2.—The Sifting.—Did God think Gideon's army was too large or too small? 2. How did he propose to reduce the number? 3. Why did he want it smaller? 2. How many acknowledged they were afraid and went home? 3. How many remained? 3. Was the army small enough then? 4. How was it to be made still smaller? 4-6. Those that "lapped" the water scooped it up in their hands and lifted it to their mouths instead of stooping down to drink. How many were they that "lapped" the water? 6. All that Gideon had left, then, was 300 and he was to overcome 135,000! If he was victorious what would that show?

3.—The New Sign.—What does God tell Gideon in verses 9-11? Was Joshua afraid? He was told to go if he was afraid *and he went*. How did the Midianites appear? 12. What did he hear? 13, 14. What did this dream mean? 14. Who made the soldier have this dream? For whose benefit was it? What effect did it have upon Gideon? 15. Was that the effect God wanted?

4.—The Attack.—What did Gideon's soldiers have? 8, 16. What were they to do? 17, 18. What were they to cry? 18. What did they do? 19-22. Being in three divisions they were on three sides of the Midianites, who thought they were surrounded. Did Gideon's soldiers fight? 22, 23. They could not fight—why? 20.

5.—The Victory.—Was there any need of their fighting? 22. What lesson was it that told about a victory by blowing of trumpets? Josh. 6: 12-20. Read the Home Readings for Wednesday and Thursday and you will find two other cases where the enemies of Israel slaughtered themselves. After the Midianites were routed did the 22,000 cowards come back? 23. How did Gideon try to prevent the Midianites from getting over Jordan? 24. What did the Ephraimites accomplish? 23. How many were killed? 8: 10. What did the Israelites want Gideon to do after this victory? 8: 22. Did Gideon do as they wanted? 23. Read all the eighth chapter thoroughly.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE ARMIES.—Gideon's army (6: 34, 35) was composed, first, of his own family; second, of his tribe; and lastly, of men of Asher, Zebulon, and Naphtali—in all 32,000. (3) It was a large army to rally to the call of an obscure young man—the youngest of the house that was the least in all Manasseh. But what was that compared to the army of the Midianites that lay along the valley "like grasshoppers for multitude"—135,000 in number! Gideon's army was on a hill—the Midianites were in the valley of Jezreel. 6: 33. "The hill Moreh" does not now give any clue to the locality. "Moreh" signifies a pointer, or indicator, and was so named probably from its local pre-eminence. Many suppositions have been entertained as to its position, but no location seems to have had better justification than that, in each case, the place might answer to the conditions.

THE SIFTING.—2–8. Verily God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways, or else Gideon would have despatched messengers throughout the length and breadth of the land, saying: "*Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty, for we be but few.*" That is not what God permitted him to do, however. "*The people that are with thee are too many for me.*" Gideon was accustomed to calculate means in accomplishing ends as was manifest in his incredulity that a person of so little power and influence as himself should be chosen as Israel's deliverer. Though the narrative does not say that he was surprised, yet it would not at least have been unnatural if he had inwardly exclaimed: "*Too many, Lord! I can't do with less!*" For the reduction which the Lord gave a hint of was no inconsiderable one—it meant the bulk of Gideon's army. The reasons that God gave for it was: "Lest Israel should vaunt themselves against me saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Cutting down the army a few thousand would have made no difference in their disposition to boast and claim the victory as their own. All confidence in numbers—all possibility of attributing the victory to numbers must be taken away. When God saves his salvation must not only be not of men, but evidently not of them, "that no flesh should glory in his presence."

Cowards eliminated.—Gideon was, therefore, prepared for a large reduction of his little army. God's first rule for lessening its numbers was to let the fearful go home. Apparently there was no cause for apprehension that this would materially decrease the army. It seemed rather to have been a wise precaution, such as has often commended itself to generals, to get rid of the faint-hearted few who may communicate a panic to the many. In this case the proclamation was but putting into practice the rule laid down in Deut. 20: 8. To get rid of the timid was a proceeding which must have won Gideon's inward approval, but even with the hint which God had given him, it may be safely assumed that he was not prepared for the departure of twenty-two thousand cowards! He must have felt as if all the human basis of his hopes for success was crumbling away beneath him. What effect this and the subsequent diminution had upon him will be noted farther on.

The water test.—Those who "lapped" the water, instead of kneeling down to drink, simply stood, and, dipping up the water with their hands, made, in drinking, a noise like the lapping of water by a dog. Some travelers have said that in the present day they have seen the same thing exceedingly dextrously done by the nomad tribes of the east. Various conjectures have been put forward as to the reason of the selection based upon such a test. Bertheau supposes those who lapped the water were exceedingly timid, and that, therefore, the victory was, intentionally, all the more wonderful. They did not kneel because of the watchfulness caused by their timidity.

But this does not accord with the purpose of the preceding test. Men as fearful as that would have been found among their twenty-two thousand fellows. Keil thinks that their not stooping to drink indicated both vigilance and bravery. True soldiers would not allow themselves to be so much off guard in the near presence of the enemy. Raschi, the Jewish interpreter, believes that the test was altogether a moral one — that it was to discover the faithful few who had kept faith with the Lord and had not bowed the knee to Baal. Those who worshiped idols knelt before them, and on this account kneeling would become very distasteful, very ominous, and very significant to those who remained loyal to the one, true God. Those who readily knelt in drinking would therefore show such as had no scruples in assuming such a posture, and, therefore, would indicate the secret of their worship. Those who quenched their thirst standing would as clearly point out those whose stern sense of integrity to Jehovah would not allow them even on such an occasion to bend the knee. We need hardly say that this view most commends itself to us, as it is most in accordance with God's character and methods. It is in harmony with the command given by Joshua just before the crossing of the Jordan: "Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you." What he wants in carrying on his work is men of clean hands and pure hearts. Whenever he can find those he can work mightily though their numbers be but few. Sanctifying Gideon's host meant culling out the major part of it.

The Quotient.—Three hundred only! Though the process may have seemed strange to Gideon, yet God had multiplied by division. Before this process of reduction it was: Gideon plus 32,000 men, the most of whom were cowards. God eliminated all but his own faithful followers, and then putting himself in the place of those sent away, it was: Gideon plus three hundred men of faith plus the Mighty One of Israel. The result showed whether Gideon lost or gained by the division. And in the face of this relentless reduction of an army already comparatively weak, from 32,000 to 300, what comes of that worldly-wise "common sense" apothegm: "The Lord is always on the side of the heaviest battalions"? And how shines out that motto made memorable to us by its adoption in the early part of our struggle for independence: "The race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong"!

THE NEW SIGN. — 9–15. Gideon's courage had not been able to stand a test so heroic. As his little army under the divine tests fell away, his valor went to pieces with it. For God spoke to him in a dream that same night, saying: "Arise, get thee down unto the host, for I have delivered it into thy hand. *But if thou fear to go down*, go then with Phurah, thy servant, etc. *Gideon went down with Phurah!* The dream that he heard interpreted was "to strengthen his hands," so that he might not be afraid to go down. The hand of God shifted the scenery in the dream of the sleeping soldier; it was God that gave to his fellow the insight into its interpretation—all that Gideon might dismiss his fears and go down with faith to the battle.

The dream was that a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent and smote it that it fell, etc. The interpretation was that this was nothing else save the sword of Gideon, for into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all his host. Barley bread was the food of the very poor, and as Israel was now reduced to an extremity of poverty, with that for its principal sustenance, "a cake of barley bread" very appropriately represented Israel in the person of Gideon. "The tent" would as appropriately represent the nomadic host whose lives were spent in such ever-changing habitations. It was the principal tent that was struck — the tent of the commander-in-chief—the tent that stood for all the rest. In being

overturned by so insignificant and so inadequate a thing as "a cake of barley bread," God was indicating the disparity of the power to the result, and the fact that he was taking "the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." And the result was that when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation he worshiped. All doubt was gone, and now he was fitted for God's use.

THE ATTACK—16–20—was made in the beginning of the second watch, just as they had newly placed their sentinels and so felt unusually secure. It is plainly to be inferred that the plan of the attack was of the Lord's direction, as was the diminishing of the army. This contemplated no fighting on the part of the Israelites, and that is not according to human nature, any more than it was to send away over thirty-one thousand men. That would have said: Frighten first and then slay afterwards. But they were simply "to stand" around the camp of their enemies. After their pitchers were broken they had torches in one hand and trumpets in the other, so they could not have fought if they would. The courage of inactivity under such circumstances is higher than the courage of battle. One can now see why God was not content to stop with simply sending home the cowards. Mere bravery was not strong enough for his purpose—he must have faith. And that he could not find except in those who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

They were to cry: "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon." Plainly this cry was to be the most effectual of the means used in producing terror among the Midianites. The sudden exhibition of torches on every side and the blow of the trumpets indeed were relied upon to create the impression of being surrounded by overwhelming numbers, but among these superstitious idolaters there was an indefinable fear of this Jehovah, whose claims far exceeded their pretentions for their idols, and with the history of whose wonderful deeds for his people they were familiar. It was not simply the sword of Gideon, whose feebleness, no doubt, they despised, but it was the sword of the LORD that had suddenly come upon them; and it was this cry that magnified their fears and made them see a foe in every friend.

THE VICTORY.—21–25. The torches, the trumpets, the cry accomplished their purpose. The vast host was thrown into utter confusion. They ran and cried and fled, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow. They fled in three directions: to Beth-shittah in Zererath; to the border of Abel-meholah; and to Tabbath. Their object was to reach the fords of the Jordan. We can not attempt definitely to locate these points. The general course of the retreat may be seen by taking a map and looking at the valley of Jezreel (Esdrælon), and then noting that the three fords must have been somewhere between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. It was Gideon's purpose to cut off the flight of one, and perhaps two of the divisions, by having the Ephraimites pre-occupy the fords. The plan was successful, and Oreb, "The Wolf," and Zeeb, "The Raven," two princes of the Midianitish host, fell into their hands and were executed; the rock upon which the one, and the winepress by which the other was slain, retaining their names for a long time after. Of that great host there fell one hundred and twenty thousand. 8: 10.

And now how valiant are the men of Asher, and Naphtali, and Manasseh, who meekly accepted the brand of a coward and went home! Now they gather themselves together in hot and valiant pursuit of a helpless, terror-stricken foe. 23.

THE AFTERVIEW.—The lesson is not complete without a glance at those things which took place after the victory. They are all narrated in the eighth chapter. They are: 1.—(1–3) His wise dealing with the irate Ephraimites, who, after their own success and the general easy victory, were angry because they

were not called in at the first of the conflict. "Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim," he says, "better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?" He had nothing special to show for his part in the conflict—they had two princes. He does not conceal the fact that the battle was won without them, and affirms that God delivered Oreb and Zeeb into their hands. And yet he adds: "What was I able to do in comparison of you?" They do not see how Gideon's modesty exalts him and debases them, and what a fine unintentional irony there is in his speech. "Only by pride cometh contention," and "for every right work a man is envied of his neighbor." 2.—His dealings with Succoth and Penuel. 4–17. With the Ephraimites he had been gentle and placable, for they were brethren, and had shown a brother's zeal. But with these he was stern and abrupt and threatening—as he should have been. 3.—His refusal to be king. 22, 23. The people affirmed that he had delivered them, and therefore wanted him to rule over them. His answer shows that he ascribes the deliverance to God, and, therefore, says that the LORD shall rule over them. 4.—His mistake. He made an ephod out of their contributed ear-rings. The ephod was a part of the high-priest's garments. Ex. 39. Why he made this is unaccountable, unless we suppose that when all Israel went astray after idols the services of Shiloh had likewise become corrupted, and excited only his disgust. He may have thought that in him God meant to institute a new priesthood, a supposition which would be strengthened by the remembrance of the acceptance of his sacrifice under the oak tree. It is improbable that Gideon made it with any but a sincere motive. At all events, however, it was unfortunate, for not only did all Israel go a whoring after it, but it became, also, "a snare to Gideon and his house." It is likely that he put it on himself and became inflated with the thought that what he uttered was the oracles of God. He died "in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash, his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

Side-light Topics.

1.—Fret not, dear heart, if God's hand prunes your fair growth beyond what seemeth to be the power of endurance. So the gardener trims the plants he loves until nothing is left but a few roots or unsightly bulbs. But out of these spring the perfect flowers. While seeming to take away he has but added to their strength. So the refiner of silver tries his ores until he can see his face in the melted metal. He indeed takes away—but it is only the dross. Job. 23: 10; Dan. 12: 10; Zech. 13: 9; Jas. 1: 3, 4, 12; 1 Pet. 1: 6, 7.

2.—It was a hard lesson for Gideon to learn as his army melted away, but, after the battle was over, then could he readily see that God's strength had been made perfect in his weakness. It is no less hard for us to learn, but if we do master it we shall have learned what faith is. 1 Cor. 1: 23–25; 2 Cor. 3: 17; 12: 9, 10; Luke 14: 11; John 3: 30; Jas. 4: 6; Heb. 12: 11.

3.—God has no use for cowards. "The fearful and unbelieving, etc., shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Therefore let those that are faint of heart strengthen themselves in the Lord. Cowardice is simply the lack of faith. Luke 12: 4, 5; Acts 18: 9, 10; 2 Cor. 4: 16–18; 1 Pet. 3: 14, 15; 1 Tim. 3: 13.

4.—But how wonderfully he can work through men of faith. Heb. 11: 32–35; Jas. 2: 21, 22; Matt. 17: 20; 1 John 5: 4, 5.

5.—If the church would not put her trust in numbers, or in power, or in riches, but only in the Lord, how much stronger would she be to-day! 1 Sam. 2: 6, 7; Ps. 75: 6, 7; Is. 33: 1, 2; 57: 13; Eccl. 9: 11; Jer. 9: 23, 24; 17: 5–7; 2 Cor. 1: 9.

6.—Perfect faith gives perfect victory—"according to your faith be it unto you." Matt. 9: 29.

HYMN.

Strong in the Lord of Hosts
And in his mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

BLACKBOARD.

DIVINE ARITHMETIC.
32,000—22,000—700
More than Equal
135,000. WHY?

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—*Gideon's Army.* What it was composed of. Numbered 32,000. Midianites —135,000—over four times as many— "like grasshoppers for multitude."

2.—*The reduction.* Cowards out—God had no use for them. God wants all his soldiers—even his little soldiers—to be brave. He will take away all fear if we ask him. How many went home as cowards? Twenty-two thousand! That left Gideon only ten thousand. Now the Midianites were thirteen times as many as Gideon's army, and yet God reduced it still more. Why? To get those only who believed on him. He wanted those who had faith in him. Tell about the water test. How it showed those who had not bowed the knee to Baal. That left only three hundred. *Now* the Midianites were four hundred and fifty times stronger than the Israelites. Could Gideon succeed against so many with so few?

3.—Gideon afraid—how he was strengthened again—the dream—its meaning—effect on Gideon.

4.—Gideon's army divided—surrounds the enemy—torches in lamps—trumpets. Lamps broken so that the torches are seen—trumpets blown—the cry "sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The terror of the Midianites—they destroy each other—their flight—the capture of Oreb "the Wolf" and Zeeb "the Raven." Gideon overcomes the remainder. Only 15,000 left of 135,000. That is the way God fights for his children.

HYMN.

I am weak but Thou art strong,
Can I on Thy strength rely?
Yes, for Christ within his arms
Took such little ones as I.

BLACKBOARD.

The Lord Helped
GIDEON.
The Lord will
HELP ME.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

THAT authority in the book trade, the *Publishers' Weekly*, touches upon a subject of great interest to all purchasers of Sunday-school libraries, and to which, it will be remembered, we called attention last year. It speaks of juvenile literature in general, but what it says is peculiarly applicable to the Sunday-school department of it. "It is a generally admitted fact," it affirms, "that in juvenile books prices have been made high to cover the abnormal discounts which have become the regular thing." This policy, in its opinion, is the result of the constant demand for discounts by buyers, who are more pleased with the amounts thrown off the price than careful as to the character of the books they get. This has been specially true, we are sorry to say, of purchasers of Sunday-school libraries. There is hardly a Sunday-school that goes into the market to replenish its stock of books that does not plead its poverty, and say: "Now we have only got a little money and want to make it go just as far as it can,

and you must favor us in price just as much as possible." According to the *Publishers' Weekly*, the consequence of such action is a fictitious price and a discount that is perfectly satisfactory! And this explains the generous "donations" that booksellers make to poverty-pleading schools. As the *Weekly* says, the present system is a pernicious one, with a tendency to make both buyer and seller "tricky, often mean, and sometimes downright dishonest." The only way out of this is for Sabbath-schools to be sturdily independent, asking for no favors; buying only what they can pay for, not expecting to get for their money more than its worth; and insisting, not on discounts, but on paying only what is a fair price for the books they want.

THE Executive Committee of the International Convention has at last been heard from. The convention is to meet in Baltimore on the 11th to the 13th of May. The programme embraces, first, "The Work Done," second, "The Work to be Done." Under the first head we shall have reports from the Statistical Secretary and the International Lesson Committee, and under the second the following topics will be treated first by selected speakers, and then thrown open for general discussion:

How to secure pupils from the unevangelized masses.

How to secure more pupils from the church.

How to secure more efficient co-operations with the home.

How to secure for children the fullest advantages of the sanctuary services, and the social services of the church.

How to increase the teaching power of the Sunday-school.

The contribution of the Sunday-school to the intellectual and spiritual power of the church.

Each state, we believe, is entitled to send twice the number of its Congressional representation, and, while at this writing, the official call is not yet published, the local associations should already be selecting those whom they would most desire to represent them in such a convention. Baltimore extends a hearty hospitality to all delegates to the convention. To secure a place names should be sent prior to may 1st to Rev. H. A. Smeltz, No. 8 N. Charles St., Baltimore.

WE have no doubt that the convention will be a good one — perhaps exceptionally so. And yet looking at the work to be done between this and the time for its meeting we can not help but wish that the programme had had a longer announcement. A topic, like a joint of beef, does not yield all its rich juices on a little boiling. The subjects given us now should have been given six months ago, so that to both speakers and delegates they would have been all this time yielding up their very marrow, and in that way we would be absolutely sure that the convention would not be fed on thin soup. We do not seem to be any better off as regards the Illinois State Convention programme. The last we heard of that was that if the International Convention adopted a good programme it would be re-adopted here! That is labor-saving, but the saving of labor in programmes is just what we do not want. Give us your best thoughts, brethren, on their arrangement in ample time to enable other people to give their best thoughts on the topics selected by you, and then our conventions will have a solid value that will be appreciated.

THERE is, as Rev. W. H. Jordan says in the *Sunday School World*, both poetry and prose in Sunday-school work. Under the first he ranges the pic-nic, the convention, the social gatherings of the schools, the presents from affectionate classes, and the animating anniversaries and jubilees. But, as Mr. Jordan observes, Sunday-schools can not live and thrive on that kind of aliment altogether. Their usual diet must be something more substantial than toothsome sweets. Good, solid food, in the long run, is better for the appetite, as well as the digestion, and, in the preparation of that and in the other duties incident to a teacher's vocation, comes in the prose of the work. And

in this there is no hint of "jingling syllables and pretty verse." It means "plodding through sunshine and shower, heat and cold, visiting and praying, studying and working, giving liberally of money and muscle, brain and heart." We have plenty of people willing to take hold of the pleasant part of the enterprise, where there is real titillating enjoyment, but the volunteers for the savorless portion of it are comparatively few. And yet it must be done—is the most necessary to be done. And those who do it are sure to find, sooner or later, that there is a special reward of comfort in it, utterly unknown to those who desire, butterfly like, only to sip the sweets of Sunday-school labor.

IT was a good idea for Margaret E. Sangster to call attention in the *Christian Union* to the fact that the neglected children are not always those that inhabit the dilapidated and over-crowded tenement houses of our large cities. She says, and thousands will sorrowfully testify how truly she says it, that she has known a family of children clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, that were wholely under the care of illiterate, vulgar, and unprincipled servants, and who, so far as any manifestation from their parents of real affection for them is concerned, were as badly off as though they occupied the place of Lazarus at the gate of their comfortable home. As between "Rag Fair" and Fifth Avenue Mrs. Sangster is inclined to believe that the former is not half so anxious to shirk its responsibilities as the latter. The father is too much immersed in business, and the mother too much engaged with company ever to find time to think of—much less train—their children. It does not lessen the sadness of such neglect that the children wear good clothes and have warm feet.

No question discussed in Sabbath-school conventions proves to be a more absorbing topic than that of teachers' meetings. The unanimous judgment is that they are of unspeakable value, and yet they are almost unanimously neglected. The *Kentucky Presbyterian*, referring to this fact, says that while with many the chief reason for non-attendance is an inexcusable torpor and indolence, yet with many more conscientious teachers the excuse given is want of time. Admitting that they are candid and sincere, yet that paper suggests that they could fall into no greater mistake, for a grand fact about these meetings is that they are time-saving institutions. And in this the *Presbyterian* is right. No one can afford to be without the help that it imparts. By its aid the hours of preparation are wonderfully shortened. To refuse to go to a teachers' meeting for want of time is very much like declining, for the same reason, to get on a railroad train to go to one's destination, instead of jogging along in a "one-hoss shay."

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

SAYS a superintendent in the *Sunday School Journal*: "When I am approached by young men and women who want to be Sunday-school teachers, I feel like saying to them *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.*" And he has no more than a just appreciation of the importance and the privileges of teaching in the Sabbath-school.——The Sabbath-school convention of the Presbytery of Huntington, Pa., shows that its members have an exalted idea of the position and work of a librarian. They say that "with our ideas of the wise librarian there is no higher office in the school. He may be a Harlan Page, and do a Harlan Page's work as truly as any other worker." That is not the common idea of a librarian, however. Usually that office is used to anchor some boy who feels a little too big to be in a class, and who otherwise might feel that he

had outgrown the school entirely. There isn't the least suggestion of a Harlan Page in ninety-nine out of a hundred of our librarians.———*The Interior* never said truer or better words than these: "We presume to say the number of additions to the church from the Sunday school measures with tolerable accuracy the shepherd care of the church over its lambs. A pastor who devotes himself to the audience-room and neglects the school-room will presently find himself in the midst of a company of young people who are strangers to him. Or, sadder still, he will find they have strayed altogether beyond his influence. A closer union between church and school, a more practical, organized, and constant care by the officers of the church over the lambs of the flock would result in a steady progress from the school to the church, from the class-room to the communion table."———The *Sunday School Times* took happy occasion when the lesson concerned the Cities of Refuge to speak a word in behalf of those children who have no place to go for sympathy. "We pity," it said, "the many poor young souls that have no City of Refuge. The child-heart yearns for sympathy. It must have it or be utterly wretched. Oftener than we suspect young souls are early spoiled by this simple cause—they have no earthly place to which to flee in which they may find refuge and rest." ———"Two objections," says a New England Pastor, "are likely to be raised by my people against any plan of improvement proposed, either of which would be fatal to the plan. One is: 'We never tried that in this church.' The other is: 'We tried that once and it didn't go.'" As the *Independent* remarks: "These objections are not unknown in other parishes." And they always prove equally fatal to all progress.———It is absurd to think that any thorough teaching can be done without teaching theology. We are not prepared to say, with the *Illustrated Bible Studies*, that every Sunday-school should be a "veritable theological seminary," though we believe with that periodical, that "the most enduring characters are built on the rock of solid and very definite gospel truth." An un-theological gospel would be, in its unstable jelly-ness, very much like a boneless man.———Some one describes Mr. Jacobs as "a man of about forty or forty-five years, a blue-eyed, thin-faced man, of spare form, as if he had lost flesh in looking after Sunday-school boys and girls, with a wide-awake, Yankee look to him." Not bad.———Among the list of eminent men who were honored by securing the warm friendships of children was Washington Irving. Said a little boy, who, after his death, was almost inconsolable: "I have lost two of my best friends—my little brother and Washington Irving."———A bright little girl has invented a new verb to express the act of coaxing street waifs into the Sunday-school. She had been puzzled as to what she could do to help in the Master's work, when it occurred to her that she might do some missionary work in that direction, and then she broke out with: "I'll tell you what I can do—I can highway and hedge 'em!" Highway and Hedge 'em Bands are now in order.

Sunday School Work.

The professor of Hebrew at Andover has led off in a move in the right direction. He has so arranged the studies of his classes as to include each week the passage containing the Bible lessons for the following Sabbath. Other theological seminaries will please note this fact. ———Another lingual aid to understand the Scriptures is offered in the class formed by Prof. Boise, of this city, to study the New Testament in the Greek language. By comparing the Greek with the English version the nicer shades of meaning are caught. The class, we

understand, is already respectable in point of numbers, and is increasing in interest. It meets every Sunday morning at the Michigan Avenue Baptist church.——The Methodists are getting a strong hold in Salt Lake. They have three Sunday-schools there with an aggregate attendance of five hundred. Two of them are mission schools and the other is connected with the elegant church which they have lately erected. Besides these they have about two hundred students under their care in what is called "The Rocky Mountain Seminary."——Wm. Reynolds and Rev. W. P. Paxson, the missionary of the American Sunday School Union, are holding Sunday-school meetings in Texas. Their appointments include Jefferson, Dallas, Waco, Austin, Houston, and Galveston. We can safely predict a Sunday-school revival in that state.——In the school of the North Presbyterian church of St. Louis the first name on the roll-call is, "Rev. H. C. Foote, pastor." And rarely does he fail to answer, "Present!" The intimate connection between the church and the school that is implied in the fact of his name being foremost, would of itself quietly do a great deal of good in showing to the scholars that the Sunday-school is not an "independent" institution, and in impressing upon the adults that their place is in the Sabbath-school as well as the church. Other pastors will find that their influence will at least be no wise injured by making the first response at Sabbath-school roll-call.——Geo. Trask, the persistent opponent of tobacco, is dead, but his work has been taken up by his devoted widow. She sends us his last unfinished tract, addressed to Spurgeon, and entitled, "Spurgeon and his Cigar." Though it is unfinished it is complete enough to be a scorching answer to that impious saying of Spurgeon's declaring that he would smoke "to the glory of God." In that remark Spurgeon's cigar burned his own fingers very badly indeed.——The school at Winona, Minn., which gave us that excellent manual, "*The Sunday School Concert*," and with which Mrs. Crafts was once connected as teacher of its infant-class, has lately lost, by resignation, Dr. Franklin Staples, who has been its superintendent for the last eight years. Mr. J. G. Nind succeeds him.——*Pilgrim's Progress*, that book over which generations of children have pored with delight, and which will continue to fascinate those of coming generations, is to be issued in two parts among the Dime Standard Books published by Howard Challen. At a price of twenty cents how much its circulation will be increased! And already it has had, next to the Bible, the largest sale of any book in the English language.——A "Conversational Bible Class" for young men has been organized in Cincinnati, "to meet the modern, scientific, and other objections to the Bible, rather than to study in the manner customary in Sabbath-schools." It meets in the rooms of the Y. M. C. A. on Sunday afternoons. We should prefer a "Conversational Bible Class" organized to study the Bible after "the manner customary in Sabbath-schools," taking up objections only as incidents to the study rather than as the main purpose of it. There is a danger of becoming better acquainted with the objections than with the Bible itself. It is easier to sow a crop of interrogation points than it is to weed them out.——The Tremont Temple Baptist Church of Brooklyn is also one of those churches that regard the school simply as a department of the church, and its deacons are *ex-officio* superintendents in it. The idea accords well with the way by which our good friend, Dr. Blackall, characterizes the Sunday-school. He calls it "The teaching session of the church." That characterization ought to be universal.——A missionary of the American Sunday School Union says that in a certain village in Kentucky he could not collect twenty dollars for Sunday-school missions because the citizens had just sent five hundred dollars for tickets in the

Louisville Public Library Lottery. In other places he found that every dollar above what was required to procure the bare necessaries of life was put into those lottery tickets. That lottery in the end will cost the state of Kentucky ten times the sum that it would have cost to have paid for the library by a good honest tax. As it is, it will always be a monument to State-encouraged gambling.

THE TEACHERS MEETING.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—W. R. Burnham, superintendent of the Norwich Congregational Sunday-school, publishes some exceedingly neat, ribbed cards, on one side of which is an assurance that, "Earnest Christian teachers will heartily welcome to their classes *all* who desire to study the Bible," and an earnest invitation to the adult members of the church and congregation to become members of Bible classes. On the other side is a full outline programme of the order of exercises, and, at the bottom, a hint that will lead all peripatetic speechmakers to avoid that school. That hint announces: "*Every part of the service has special reference to the lesson of the day.*"

—Interrupted, responsive readings at the opening of the school are better than the ordinary verse by verse way of reading. In the interrupted readings the school must be prepared to commence immediately when the superintendent stops, and to stop immediately when he begins. This necessitates a wide-awake alertness and attention on the part of the scholar that of itself is a good thing, but is chiefly preferable for the force with which the prominent parts of the lesson may be brought out, making the reading seem almost like question and answer. We subjoin the first lesson of the month (Josh 24: 14–18), so arranged, which will be hint enough as to the others:

Supt.—Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and

School.—Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

Supt.—And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord,

School.—Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell:

Supt.—But as for me and my house

School.—We will serve the Lord.

Supt.—And the people answered and said,

School.—God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods;

Supt.—For the Lord our God, he it is that

School.—Brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

Supt.—And the Lord drave out from before us

School.—All the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land:

All.—Therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God.

—The Asbury M. E. School, Cincinnati, of which J. W. Dale is superintendent, is divided into four grades—"Senior, Junior, Secondary, and Primary." When it comes to review days each department is reviewed in a room by itself. A staff of four reviewers selected from the teachers are appointed for each of the two higher grades, the superintendent being included in the one for the Senior section. Forty-five minutes are given to review. The first reviewer spends eight minutes on the Sacred Geography of the lessons, the second twelve minutes on History and Biography, the third fifteen minutes on Doctrines, and the fourth ten minutes on the curriculum, or special course of study, which was outlined in this magazine by Rev. Jas. E. Gilbert, pastor of the school. One teacher does all the reviewing in each of the two lower grades.

THE

NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

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THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY CHANCELLOR HOWARD CROSBY, D. D.

THE Book of Ruth has been erroneously styled a pastoral. But it is neither poetry nor dialogue—both of which are necessary to a pastoral. It is a simple history, of the same warp and woof as the books of Joshua and Judges. It has no more of the episodical character than the story of Micah, in the book of Judges. As that story is introduced in the history to explain both the removal of Dan and the genesis of idolatry in Israel, so the story of Ruth is an expansion of the details of one family for an important historic and religious purpose. Its Hebrew is the same as that of the preceding books—clear, simple, and graphic. The language evidently belongs to an early age of the Hebrew commonwealth. It contains a marked beauty of antithesis and parallel, forms of figure to which a simple language is best adapted. Note, as examples: "And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her." "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried." "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara." "I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." "Let her glean among the sheaves and reproach her not, and let fall of the handfuls for her to glean and rebuke her not." "Do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem." The book abounds in a gentle kindliness, as shown in the graceful and heart-fresh words of Naomi and Boaz as well as of Ruth, but almost the only trope in the narrative is in those expressive words of Boaz: "A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, *under whose wings thou art come to trust.*"

Boaz is supposed by some to be the same as Ibzan, of Bethlehem (Judges 12: 8–10), who judged Israel seven years. But though the names resemble one another, and the time of Ibzan might correspond to the time of Boaz, the identification is only conjecture. If Jesse begat David at 50 years of age, and Obed begat Jesse at 30, we should have Obed's birth from Ruth and Boaz occurring 80 years before David's. If we place David's birth in B. C. 1080, Obed's birth would be thus placed in B. C. 1160, and we should put the narrative of Ruth B. C. 1170 and 1160. Usher's chronology makes it one hundred and fifty years earlier, which seems impossible from the pedigree in chapter 4: 17.

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The scene of the whole narrative, except the first eighteen verses, is Bethlehem (the House of Bread), where, nearly twelve centuries after, He who is the Bread of Life was to be born. Bethlehem is prettily situated in the highlands of Judah, six miles south of Jerusalem, on a limestone height, surrounded by fair valleys, where Ruth's great-grand-son used to tend the flocks.

The outline of the story is this: Elimelech, of Bethlehem, his wife Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion forsake Bethlehem and Judah on account of a prevailing famine, and take up their residence in the land of Moab, a land that lay invitingly near (only a two days' journey), but whose idolatry was most gross. There the two sons marry Moabitish wives. After ten years the two sons die, their father having died before them. Naomi, a desolate widow, deprived also of her children, determines to leave a land so identified with her sorrows and return to Bethlehem. Her daughters-in-law accompany her for a part of the way, when she bids them return. One of them, Orpah, returns, but Ruth, with earnest expressions of devotion, insists upon remaining with Naomi. So the two, Naomi and Ruth, reach Bethlehem. In their poverty Ruth asks permission to glean in the harvest fields. Naomi consents, and Providence leads the young Moabitish widow to the fields of Boaz, a rich and influential kinsman of Elimelech. There Boaz notices her, learns her history, and at length (after the waiving of the right by a nearer relative) performs the part of kinsman and becomes the husband of Ruth.

Now why is this narrative given us in the Bible? Why, in a book which we should suppose would be condensed as much as possible, is this apparently unnecessary expansion? It certainly can not be simply to entertain our æsthetic faculty. Nor can it be to exhibit the ancestry of David and of the Messiah. Such relationship could be shown without these minute details. We hold that beyond these ends the book was especially designed to illustrate the idea of the *Goel*, or Redeemer in his tenderest relations to the redeemed, and thus throw light on the relations of a saved soul to our spiritual Redeemer, of whom the Jewish Goel was a type. In the avenger of blood we have one element of spiritual redemption clearly exhibited, that of destroying our destroyer. But there are two other elements connected with our redemption, which can be seen only in some new form of the Goel. These are given in Boaz. The name (*in him is strength*) is significant. When all is weakness in the sinful man, in the Redeemer is the fullness of strength. Ruth is a Moabitess, and hence under a curse. How aptly she represents our case as lost and outcast in our depraved nature! Boaz, the mighty man of wealth, buys back the lost possession of Elimelech's family. So our Boaz purchases back for us the holiness our race had lost. Boaz also marries Ruth, the Moabitess ("Ruth the Moabitess have I purchased to be my wife," ch. 4: 10) as part of his purchase. So our Boaz marries the lost but saved soul, loves it with a divine and eternal affection, and makes it a partner of his home. ("I go to prepare a place for you * * that where I am ye may be also." John 14: 2, 3.) Our good works are the fruit of this union. They receive their goodness from our Redeemer. The poor outcast is now exalted to wealth and honor as joined indissolubly to the Ruler of all, and yet He (who is God over all), in forming this union, appeared to the needy soul as *next of kin*. Herein is our Saviour's incarnation beautifully and forcibly betokened. There is still another side lesson in this delicious book of Ruth. It is the lesson of simple faith which Ruth exercises in claiming Boaz as her Redeemer. She is bold but not presumptuous, calm but not apathetic, faithful but not perfunctory, modest but not prudish, and she is all this because of her faith in Boaz as her Goel. What a volume of instruction is there in this to us! How by it the

whole subject of faith is illuminated!

Such, we take it, is the meaning of the book of Ruth. Wherever the word Redeemer or Redemption occurs in the prophets and in the apostles, turn back to the book of Ruth and there refresh your thoughts with the illustration of redemption that you find in that limpid narrative. Just as you understand the love of God the better by thinking of the father throwing his arms around the prodigal's neck and kissing him, so you will understand your Redeemer's relation to you the better by studying this divinely furnished picture of Boaz and Ruth.

SAMSON THE SUNNY.

BY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT.

He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city.—*Bible.*
Most powerful is he who has himself in his power.—*Seneca.*
Conquer thyself. Till thou hast done that thou art a slave; for it is almost as well for thee to be in subjection to another's appetite as thy own.—*Burton.*
No man is free who can not command himself.—*Pythagoras.*
What is the best government? That which teaches us to govern ourselves.—*Goethe.*
Do you want to know the man against whom you have most reason to guard yourself? Your looking-glass will give you a very fair likeness of his face.—*Whately.*

I HAVE noticed that readers usually peruse the story and skip the moral. So in the quotations with which this article is headed I put the moral first, and follow it with the history. It is safe to assume that the reader of THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER will find elsewhere in its pages the lessons of Samson's romantic life and tragic death, drawn out at some length. Here, imitating the example of the Bible, I shall simply tell the story, leaving its readers to deduce the moral for themselves, and to find it, as they doubtless will, elsewhere in this magazine.

There is so much in common in the mythological tale of Hercules and the historical life of Samson, that we may justly conclude that the Greek fable was drawn from the Hebrew history. Both are men of superhuman strength, of exuberant physical life, of wild, ungovernable passions, of broad, trenchant humor. Both slay a lion with their own hands, both suffer death, though in different ways, through the treachery of their wives. One, a captive in Philistia, commanded to make sport for his enemies, pulls down the temple of Dagon upon them, and whelms them and himself in the ruins. The other, a captive in Egypt, is led forth to be sacrificed to Jupiter, breaks his bands, slays the priests, and scatters the gathered multitude. Even the custom of tying a lighted torch between two foxes in the circus, in memory of the damage once done to the harvest, by a fox with burning hay tied to it, was long maintained in Greece.

But though externally the stories resemble each other, internally there is a vast difference between them. Hercules is exalted for his strength while he lives, and deified because of it when he dies. Mythology worships might. Samson accomplishes nothing permanent or valuable by his strength while he lives, and barely retrieves his name from opprobrium by the heroism of his fruitless death. Religion pays no honor to mere might of muscle. The life of Hercules is regarded by heathenism as an inspiration; the life of Samson by the Bible as a warning.

Samson was the only son of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan. He was born in troublous times, in times of anarchy, when there was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own eyes, in that era of Jewish history which answers to the dark ages of European history. The commonwealth which Moses had instituted had already

crumbled into decay, because the people were incompetent to maintain free institutions, and the monarchy which David organized had not yet been called into being. From the first Samson shows indications of the strength which has made his name proverbial as a symbol of muscular power; though it is noticeable that about his infancy the Scripture has gathered no such mythological tales as plainly mark the fabulous character of Hercules' life.

He is, apparently, as only sons are too apt to be—a self-willed youth. His conscious strength, and the pride it breeds in him, adds to this untamable and unrestrained willfulness. A Philistine maid captures him by her beauty. The Philistines are the hereditary foes of Israel; God has forbidden intermarriages with this degenerate and heathen nation. But neither piety nor patriotism can restrain Samson. The remonstrances of his parents are equally unavailing. He goes down to Timnath; kills a lion on the way with no other weapon than his hands; on a second visit finds a swarm of bees settled in the carcass; with the rude wit characteristic of his rough good nature composes a riddle out of his adventure, and proposes it on his betrothal night, and a bet of thirty changes of raiment is made dependent on the guessing of it. The coquettish Philistine maiden cajoles his secret out of him, and tells her companions, then jilts Samson and marries his Philistine groomsman. He treats the treachery as a jest, goes to a neighboring Philistine city, robs it of enough to pay his bet, and by this burglarious proceeding satisfies his debt of honor. But he takes his jilting more to heart, and with grimly humorous revenge repays it. He catches three hundred jackals, ties them tail to tail, ties a fire brand between their tails, and sets them loose in the Philistine harvest fields. The angry Philistines, with a singular injustice, since they can not capture Samson, revenge themselves on him by killing the coquettish Philistine maiden and her father; and he repays them by a single handed attack, in which he smites them "hip and thigh with great slaughter."

This arouses the Philistines; they arm and come up against Israel. The cowardly nation, afraid of their military foe, propose to appease them by delivering Samson bound into their hands. He makes no objection, provided only Israel will not fall upon him. But no sooner is he fairly delivered into the midst of the Philistine camp than he snaps the ropes that bind him as though they were tow. The frightened Philistines scatter in every direction, and partly falling before him, and partly trampling each other under foot, a thousand are slain in the panic which ensues.

The Philistines have had enough of Samson by this time; and one would suppose that Samson would have had enough of Philistine women. But the strong man is the slave of female beauty; and Samson is next captured by a Philistine harlot, and with that same reckless disregard of consequences which characterizes his life throughout, he goes into the walled city of Gaza after her. The Philistines now are sure of their prey; they lock the great gates of the city and will capture him in the morning. With the same grim humor which has characterized his former efforts, he exhibits his scorn of their strength; rises at midnight, takes the huge gates off the hinges, shoulders them, carries them to the top of an adjoining hill, where at sunrise all the city may see them, and goes on his way.

But he who ventures his head into the lion's mouth may venture once too often. The pitcher goes often to the fountain but is broken at last. From the days of Adam down it has been proved that man's godless strength is no match for a bad woman's godless cunning. A third time Samson falls in love with a Philistine woman who is not above prostituting even love to treacherous purposes. Thrice she implores him to tell her the secret of his strength; thrice he puts her off with falsehood, jests with

her, breaks the green withes and the new ropes and the web woven into his hair, and with a shout drives off the panic stricken Philistines who imagine they have him in their toils. Then, with open eyes, knowing the treachery of treacherous women, he walks into the trap she has laid for him, lays his head in her lap, and wakes to find his head shaven and his strength gone. At length his career draws to its end. At length he is a captive in the hands of his foes. As a cat plays with its mouse, they, with exquisite cruelty, sport with him. They put out his eyes, that even if his strength returns he may be powerless to use it against them, and set him to the work of a pack-horse, grinding in the Philistine prison-house.

Then comes the tragic end. A festival of their heathen god draws nigh. That they may exalt their deity over the God of Israel they bring Samson out of his prison-house to add to the honor of Dagon. They demand that he make sport for them. He humors them—falls in with the idea—plays the buffoon. The temple is crowded—over-crowded. In the great hall beneath are lords and priests. On the roof, and in the galleries above, are the common people—three thousand of them. That temple never before witnessed such a gala day; it never before was subjected to so severe a strain. Samson feigns weariness; asks the attendant to permit him to rest against the huge stone columns; stands between them, leaning on each with one hand; then puts up the prayer: "Strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." It is not a Christian prayer. It stands in strange contrast with the petition of our Lord and Master as the nails were driven through quivering hand and foot into the cross. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." But it is a prayer such as belongs to a barbaric age and a semi-barbaric nature; and it is at all events a prayer, the first prayer which Scripture records as issuing from Samson's lips. He has learned something in that experience of grinding in the prison-house of the Philistines. He no longer trusts his own strength. He trusts in the arm and power of an Almighty God. And he seeks, too, we may well believe, not merely personal revenge for a personal wrong, but such a signal demolition of Dagon and his temple, and such a signal judgment on his worshipers, as shall assure all heathenism that the Lord he is God, and there is none else. Then he puts forth his half restored strength, bows himself with all his might, bends the already overloaded pillars. For an instant there is a tremor, as though a strong wind shook the house, or an earthquake moved it from its foundations; then a crash whose echoes roll away among the hills like the sound of rolling thunder. And the laughter and merriment and rejoicing is converted into one shriek of anguish, one howl of despair; and Samson is avenged, and Dagon overthrown, and Jehovah is exalted. "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." And his brethren come down and recover the body and bury it in the burial place of Manoah, his father.

On Samson's tombstone might well be written this epitaph: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls." A man of magnificent capabilities, born at a time when Israel above all things else needed a leader, born at a time when physical endowments were reverenced, and with endowments that would have made him his nation's leader, if he had wisely used them; so fitted both by his capacities and his opportunities to be the emancipator of his nation, he surprises the people by his fitful feats of strength, but does not serve them; uses his marvelous might only to get himself out of scrapes into which his heedless passion is constantly bringing him, and dies a death only redeemed from that of a suicide by his last prayer and his too tardy heroism. The name that might have

lived to all ages as an inspiration, and in his own nation as a sacred memory, remains only as a romance and a warning, for want of a high and noble purpose to direct the strength, and a power of self-control to husband and to employ it.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

BY REV. EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.

THE books of Samuel were originally one book in the Hebrew manuscripts, but this was afterward divided into two in the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. Why it was called the book of Samuel is a question on which scholars are not agreed. The most probable view is that the history which it contains was begun by Samuel, and called by his name, and when after his death it was continued by the prophets Gad and Nathan it was still called the book of Samuel. 1 Chr. 29: 29. In like manner, Hume's history and Olshausen's commentary are published under their names, though continued by others. The few references to times later than the time of these prophets are easily explained as illustrations inserted by some subsequent prophet, or by Ezra. This is substantially the result arrived at by Dr. F. Gardiner, in the American edition of Smith's dictionary of the Bible, and the evidence seems to justify his conclusion.

Whether we consider the purity of the language, the finish of the style, the dramatic vividness of the narrative, or the importance of the facts narrated, the books of Samuel claim the highest rank in sacred historical composition. In Smith's Dictionary of the Bible they are characterized as "one of the best specimens of Hebrew prose in the golden age of Hebrew literature," and as "holding the same rank as Joel or Isaiah, in prophetical or poetical language." The time occupied by the events narrated in these books is about one hundred and fifty-eight years. This may be divided into three periods; one of seventy-eight years, and two of forty years each. The first period begins about 1171 years before Christ, and contains the latter part of the judgeship of Eli, and the judgeship of Samuel till the accession of Saul. The second period contains the reign of Saul. The third period contains the reign of David.

In the first period Samuel is born and educated. The sons of Eli are reproved for their corruption, and finally slain in battle, and the ark taken captive by the Philistines. Under Samuel it was restored in consequence of divine judgments, and he judged Israel with wisdom and integrity. But the degeneracy of his sons who had been made judges by him led the people to demand a king. Hence Saul was appointed and reigned forty years. Though prosperous in some things, yet for disobedience he was rejected, and finally slain in battle. Under him David was developed, and designated as his successor, and after long persecutions succeeded him and reigned forty years. The great historical importance of these books is apparent from these statements, for they narrate the transition of the tribes from a federal republic under the judges to a kingdom, and the exaltation of that kingdom to its highest power under David. They narrate also the foundation and development of Jerusalem, and the reorganization and extension of religious worship in that national center by David. Hence originated that unexampled and unequaled manual of devotion, the Psalms of David. To write his Psalms he was prepared by the discipline of danger and suffering through the persecutions of Saul which are detailed in this history.

Our limits will not permit a full expansion of the preceding outline of the interesting history contained in these books, but we shall make some suggestions as to an important mode of using it for the ends of instruction, reproof, and correction for which Scripture is given, according to the great Apostle of the Gentiles. There is a wide field for all these in sermons on the striking characters whose history is given. The trials of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, her prayers and their answer, and her consecration to God of that son, who ultimately became the judge of Israel and the founder of the school of the prophets, has gone to the heart of all mothers in every subsequent age, and has stimulated and encouraged them to an early consecration of their children to God. The fearful consequences of God's anger at Eli, though a good man, for neglecting a father's duty in restraining and punishing unruly and dissolute children, have resounded as a warning to parents from that day to this, and show that they can not meet their responsibilities by mere indulgent goodness and kindness, without decided discipline, and if the case calls for it, intense severity.

The early formation and mature development of the noble character of Samuel, and his influence in founding the schools of the prophets, and in watching over the civil and religious interests of the nation furnish powerful encouragements to early piety.

The character of Saul furnishes an occasion for profound study and deep analysis. In him were elements of great power and success, but an uncontrolled self-will led him to repeated acts of disobedience to God, in consequence of which it was foretold that the kingdom should be transferred to David. Then a malignant jealousy of David embittered his character and led to persecution and deeds of blood, alternated by periods of revived affection, till at last his melancholy defeat and death closed the scene.

Of David the early development as a shepherd boy and then as the heroic champion of Israel, and the conqueror of Goliath, by faith in God, has been the delight of old and young in every generation. His long continued persecutions by Saul, and his hair-breadth escapes from death have gathered around him the sympathies of the ages and led to great joy in his final enthronement and victories, and in the enlargement of his kingdom to the utmost limits specified in the divine promise. In deep contrast with this, and the mystery of all time has been his fall into the double guilt of adultery and murder in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah. This, though bitterly repented of, was not allowed to go unpunished. The incest of Amnon with Tamar, his murder by Absalom, the rebellion of Absalom by which David was for a time driven from his throne, and the death of Absalom are set forth in vivid colors as a divine retribution on him for his crimes. Nothing can exceed the vividness with which these scenes are painted, and they open a field for analysis of character, and for a development of the power of moral causes, which can furnish the materials for many a sermon full of rich instruction for old and young.

Whilst Sunday-schools are engaged in the regular study of these books pastors can augment their interest, enlarge their views, and intensify their moral convictions by preparing sermons such as have been suggested, to be delivered in the church, and in the presence of the scholars. Thus would be counteracted a general tendency of the existing Sunday-school system, to withdraw the children from the preaching of the pastor and to make superintendents and teachers their only preachers. Such sermons would not supercede but aid the regular court of analysis and study. It would also be well for pastors, superintendents, and teachers to read some history of this period for additional suggestions. Milman's "History of the Jews" and Jahn's "History of the Hebrew Commonwealth" may be accessible, and would give variety

and richness to their conceptions of the history. Stanley's lectures on the Jewish church are of great value, though perhaps less accessible. For the life of David the recent lectures of Dr. Taylor are of great value.

SAMSON'S DEATH FEAT.

OFFICER.

Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say:
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honor this great feast and great assembly.
Rise, therefore, with all speed, and come along,
Where I will see thee heartened and fresh clad,
To appear as fits before the illustrious lords.

SAMSON.

Thou knowest I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
Our law forbids at their religious rites
My presence; for that cause I can not come.

OFFICER.

This answer, be assured, will not content them.

SAMSON.

Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Jugglers, and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
But they must pick me out with shackles tired,
And over-labored at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
The Philistine lords command:
Commands are no restraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind; which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

CHORUS.

How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

SAMSON.

Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonor
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.
Brethren, farewell; your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
Of me as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
I know not. Lords are lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired
With zeal, if aught religion seem concerned;
No less the people on their holy-days
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonorable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself,
The last of me or no I can not warrant.

MANOAH.

I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son their prisoner.
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenced Dagon and his priests;
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both god and state
They easily would set to sale; a third
More generous far and civil, who confessed
They had enough revenged, having reduced
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were proposed—
What noise or shout was that? It tore the sky!

CHORUS.

Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

MANOAH.

His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And numbered down: much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
Oh, what noise!
Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

CHORUS.

Noise call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perished!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

MESSENGER.

Oh, whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturbed and scare consulted
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concerned.

MANOAH.

The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

MESSENGER.

It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

MANOAH.

Tell us the sum; the circumstances defer.

MESSENGER.

Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen;
All in a moment overwhelmed and fallen.

MANOAH.

Sad, but thou knowest to Israelites not saddest,
The desolation of a hostile city.

MESSENGER.

Feed on that first: there may be grief in surfeit.

MANOAH.

Relate by whom?

MESSENGER.

By Samson.

MANOAH.

That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

MESSENGER.

Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

MANOAH.

Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.

MESSENGER.

Take then the worst in brief; Samson is dead!

MANOAH.

The worst indeed! Oh, all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceived,
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipped with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he? death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

MESSENGER.

Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

MANOAH.

Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.

MESSENGER.

By his own hands.

MANOAH.

Self-violence? What cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?

MESSENGER.

Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroyed:
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pulled.

MANOAH.

Oh lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

MESSENGER.

Occasion drew me early to this city,
And as the gates I entered with sunrise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaimed
Through each high street: little I had despatched,
When all abroad was rumored that this day
Samson should be brought forth to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrowed at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre,
Half round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords and each degree
Of sort might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had filled their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turned. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad: before him pipes
And timbrels; on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot; before him and behind,
Archers and slingers, cataphracts, and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamoring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He, patient and undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assayed,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still performed
All with incredible, stupendous force,
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard),
As overtired, to let him lean awhile
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspicious, led him; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head awhile inclined,
And eyes fast fixed, he stood, as one who prayed,
Or some great matter in his mind revolved:
At last, with head erect, thus cried aloud:
"Hitherto, lords, what your commands imposed
I have performed, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now, of my own accord, such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold."
This uttered, straining all his nerves he bowed,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugged, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counselors, or priests,

Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson, with these immixed, inevitably
Pulled down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only 'scaped who stood without.

CHORUS.

Oh, dearly bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfilled
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Among thy slain, self-killed,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoined
Thee with thy slaughtered foes, in number more
Than all thy life had slain before.

MANOAH.

Come, come! no time for lamentation now;
Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroically hath finished
A life heroic, on his enemies
Fully revenged, hath left them years of mourning
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
Honor hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
To himself and father's house eternal fame;
And which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favoring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Soaked in his enemies' blood; and from the stream,
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off
The clotted gore. I with what speed the while
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train
Home to his father's house: there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valor, and adventures high;
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

—*Milton's Samson Agonistes.*

CATECHISM FOR INFANT CLASSES.

BY C. H. RICHARDS.

IN the large infant class of the Congregational Sunday-school in Madison, Wis., there was felt to be a need of some brief and simple statement of some of the most elementary facts and principles of Christianity. There seemed to be nothing in print at once practical enough, and level to the comprehension of the smallest scholars. The following outline was prepared, and has done such good service for a year that it is thought it may be useful to others, or may suggest something better:

Who made you?

God.

What else has God made?

He made heaven and earth, and all that is in them.

What is God?

God is a spirit; we can not see him, yet he sees and knows all things.

Where is God?

He is everywhere; he is in this place and in all other places at once.

Is God almighty?

Yes. He can do all things. He made the world out of nothing, and unless he preserves me I can not live a moment.

Where may we learn about God?

In the Bible.

What does the Bible say about God's goodness?

"The Lord is good to all." "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."

How has God been good to you?

He gave me my life, my health, my home, my Saviour, and all the good things I enjoy.

Does God love us?

Yes. The Bible says, "God is love."

How much does he love us?

He says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love."

How has he best shown his love to men?

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Since he loves us so, what do we call him?

Our Heavenly Father.

But what does God hate?

Sin.

What is sin?

Sin is doing wrong, or not doing what God wishes us to do.

What does God say about sin in the Bible?

"Do not this abominable thing which I hate."

Will God punish those who sin?

Yes. "The wages of sin is death."

But are not you a sinner?

Yes, we are all sinners. We have done wrong many times, and often displeased our Heavenly Father.

Must you be punished for your sins?

I must, unless God saves me.

What salvation has God provided?

The Bible says, if we repent of our sins, and believe in the Saviour, and love and obey him, we shall be saved.

Who is the Saviour?

Jesus Christ.

Where was he born?

In Bethlehem of Judea.

How long ago?

More than 1800 years.

Whose son was he?

He was the Son of God.

What was his mother's name?

Mary.

What happened at the time he was born?

Angels were heard singing in the sky, and wise men came and worshiped the babe in the manger.

What is said of Jesus as a child?

He was loving and obedient, and went up with his parents to worship in the temple.

What did he do when he became a man?

He went about healing the sick and preaching the gospel.

What else did he do?

He forgave the sins of men, and promised to lead them to heaven.

How did Jesus die?

He was crucified on Calvary, that he might save men from their sins.

What occurred after he died?

The third day he rose from the dead, and he lives now and forever.

Is he with us here to-day?

Yes. He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

And will he save us?

He will, if we repent of our sins, and will love and obey him.

What invitation does he give to little children?

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

What is your duty toward Christ?

I ought to love him with all my heart, and try each day to do as he wishes me to do, and ask him to help me.

What else is your duty toward your Heavenly Father?

I ought to praise him, and pray to him, and believe that he will always bless me if I do his will.

How do you know that God will hear us if we pray?

He has promised to hear and answer our prayers.

Will you repeat the "Lord's Prayer," which Jesus taught his disciples?

"Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

What rule has God given you for obeying your parents?

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

What rule has he given you for each other?

"Little children, love one another."

What are some of the sins you ought always to avoid?

Anger, profanity, immodesty, lying, and intemperance.

What ought you always to do and be?

To speak the truth always, to be kind to all, and to be pure in thought and word.

What "Golden Rule" has God given us?

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XVIII.—MAY 2, 1875.—SAMSON'S DEATH.

SCRIPTURE.—Judges 16 : 25-31. Commit 25-31; Primary Verse, 28.

25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars.

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

30 And Samson said, let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."—Prov. 13: 20.

TOPIC.—STRONG ONLY IN THE LORD.

HOME READINGS.

M. Num. 6 : 1-21.... The Law of the Nazarite.
T. 1 Sam. 1 : 1-28.... Birth of Samuel the Nazarite.
W. Luke 1 : 5-22.... Birth of John the Nazarite.
Th. Judges 13 : 1-25.... Birth of Samson the Nazarite.
F. Judges 14 : 1-20.... Samson's Ill-judged Marriage.
S. Judges 15 : 1-20.... Samson's Retaliations.
S. Judges 16 : 1-24.... Samson's Fall.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

Samson's Birth.—Whose son was he? Of what tribe? Where did his father live? 13: 2. To whom was his birth foretold, and by whom? 13: 3. Did the woman think it was an angel? 13: 6. Whom did she tell about it? 13: 6. What did Manoah do when she told him? 13: 8. Was his prayer answered? 13: 9. To whom was this second appearance? Did Manoah see the angel at all? 13: 11. Did Manoah know it was an angel? 13: 16. What did Manoah wish to do for the angel? 13: 16. What did he do? 13: 19. What happened then? 13: 20. How did Manoah feel then? What did his wife say?

His Mission.—What was he to be? 13: 5, 7. What was he to do? 13: 5. What is a "Nazarite"? Num. 6: 2. One "separated" and devoted to the Lord by such a vow was prohibited from drinking what? Num. 6: 3. What was he forbidden to eat? Num. 6: 4. What about his hair? Num. 6: 5. Could he touch any dead body? Num. 6: 6. Couldn't he touch the dead body of his father, or mother, or brother, or sister? Num. 6: 7. Why do you think even this was not allowed? People became Nazarites for a few days only or till their vow was fulfilled. Num. 6: 5. How long was Samson to be a Nazarite? 13: 7. Were there any other Nazarites for life? 1 Sam. 1: 11; Luke 1: 15. Who were they?

History.—Whom did he marry? Did his father and mother wish him to marry a Philistine woman? 14: 3. Was it right he should? 14: 4. What happened when he was going down to his betrothal? 14: 5, 6. What happened when he went down to

his marriage? 14:8, 9. What was the riddle that he made out of that circumstance? 14:10–14. How did the Philistines get at the meaning of the riddle? 14:15–18. How did he redeem his pledge? 14:19. What became of his wife? 14:20? What did he next do to the Philistines? 15:4, 5. Why? 15:1–3. What did the Philistines then do? 15:6. How did Samson retaliate? 15:7, 8. What next did he do? 15:9–19. What did he do at Gaza? 16:1–3. How did he finally fall? 5–21.

DEATH TRIUMPH.—What did the Philistines do to Samson when they took him? 21. Did his strength come back when he was in prison, and, if so, why? 22. Whom did they think it was that delivered Samson into their hands? 23, 24. Dagon was an idol with the head and hands of a man but with the body and tail of a fish. In the midst of their feast what did they want Samson for? 25. To make sport of him, instead of his making sport for them, is what is meant. What did Samson ask to do? 26. How many people were on the roof? How many inside? 27. What was Samson's prayer? 28. What did Samson do? 29, 30. Where was he buried? 31. Was he a good man?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

SAMSON'S BIRTH.—13:1–25. His birth-place was Zorah, where lived his father Manoah, of the tribe of Dan. "Manoah" has the beautiful signification of "Rest," and indicates a life of peace and content, exactly the opposite of that which characterized his turbulent son. The pre-natal announcement of Samson's birth is so similar to the one vouchsafed to Elizabeth concerning John the Baptist (Luke 1:5–15) that one can hardly recall one without the other. In the fact, also, of its being foretold by an angel, it serves to bring up the angelic announcement to a trembling Hebrew maiden that she should be the mother of a child begotten only of the Holy Ghost—a Nazarite of Nazarites. Luke 1:26–35. In the three cases there is a climax that is reached in the last one. In the person of Samson, divinely sent, and endowed with miraculous strength, there is a hint of a coming One mighty to save; in John the Baptist we have the immediate forerunner of that wonderful deliverer; and in Jesus we have the mighty Saviour himself!

In the narrative we have a beautiful view of the child-like faith and piety of Manoah, to whom it did not occur to doubt the message that his wife brought to him; but, on the contrary, felt it take such strong hold upon him that he desired himself to see this "man of God," who had communicated intelligence so welcome, and learn from him, if he could, what further injunctions (13:12) were to be observed in the case of a child so sacred in its character, and intended for so high a destiny. Hence his simple petition to Jehovah. 13:8. And his child-like prayer is answered, though there is nothing new to communicate; and, besides, it gained him a vision of a celestial being whereas he had thought of seeing a man only. So God sometimes answers our prayers—"above all we can ask or think." The offered food and its refusal, the accepted sacrifice and the disappearance of the angel in the flames, most vividly bring up the similar circumstances that happened in the call of Gideon.

HIS MISSION.—He was to "begin to deliver Israel." 13:5. He did not complete the deliverance. That was not accomplished until the great victory of the Israelites under Samuel over the Philistines, recorded in 1 Samuel 7. That part of Israel that was "delivered into the hands of the Philistines for forty years" was west of the Jordan. The sacred writer has just given an account (ch. 11) of the liberation of the Gileadites, east of that river, by Jephthah, from the Ammonites. Now he turns to chronicle the struggles of their brethren for release from the Philistines. As their dominion began before Samson's birth (13:5), and he judged Israel for twenty years under them (15:20), his life must have been nearly coincident with their rule. Other judges were selected as men—for their character and their deeds. Samson was chosen before he was born. Ehud was singled out because of his special ability. Gideon because of his faith-bravery. Jephthah

because of his being a devout and successful military leader; but "*Samson was brought up.*"

He was to be a "Nazarite." A Nazarite was one "separated" and holy unto the Lord. His separation might be for a time — usually for thirty days — or for life. The foundation idea of such a special time of consecration lay in the fact that all Israel was chosen to be a peculiar people, holy unto the Lord. Such days of holy separation was in fact a recognition on the part of those observing them of the obligation that rested upon them as individual members of such a host to personal consecration. The law of the Nazarite is laid down in Numbers 6. The restrictions of the vow were three-fold. He must not drink any strong drink, nor even eat of the fruit of the vine, nor of anything unclean; his hair must remain uncut, and under no circumstances must he allow himself to be defiled by the touch of a dead body of any relative however dear. His long hair was the mark of a Nazarite as much as the linen garment and ephod were of the high priest. As it was prohibited to lift up any iron tool in building an altar, since iron was used to shorten life instead of prolonging it, so, for a similar reason, it may be, the hair of the Nazarite was to be unshorn, he being "a walking altar of God." The priest was not to drink wine in the temple for fear that he might not be able to distinguish between things holy and unholy, things clean and unclean, but the Nazarite was not to drink at all—was regarded as ever in the sanctuary. There were only three Nazarites for life: Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. See Home Readings.

SAMSON AS A TYPE.—The early church were fond of educing those instances in the life of Samson which would go to justify his being called a type of Christ. Among them were his pre-natal announcement; the fact that he came to an unprepared, unrepentant people, and so was solitary and alone in his efforts to free them; his slaying of the lion which they likened to that great adversary which "as a lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour," and which shall be slain by Christ. This latter likeness, especially, impressed them so strongly that it became customary to paint upon the doors of churches a picture of Samson slaying the lion as symbolical of the triumphing power of Christ. They found a similarity in Samson's entering Gaza to Christ's entering into the sepulcher, and to his bearing away the gates of that city to Christ's breaking the bars of the tomb. Even the three lies of Samson were connected by contrast with the three Scriptural quotations of Christ in his conflict with the devil in the wilderness. And, lastly, and most powerfully of all, they likened his destruction of Dagon and his temple in his last heroic act, to the victory that Christ in his death hath obtained over him who hath the power of death. The desire to make him so appear seems to arise from the natural tendency to exalt a man of great achievements, and has, for its justification, nothing else than the accidental likenesses which have been enumerated, some of which are very forced, while his character and failings would make him anything but a type of Him who though he partook of our infirmities yet knew no sin.

HISTORY.—The incidents of his life group themselves around his Marriage, his Adventure at Gaza, and his Fall.

1. *His Marriage.*—Chs. 14, 15. While his espousal of a Philistine woman was not contrary to the letter of the law as expressed in Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3, 4, the Philistines not being technically "Canaanites," yet it was contrary to the spirit of those prohibitions. The Israelites regarded them as one and the same (Josh. 13:3), and that which smites Manoah and his wife with a keen regret (14:3) that their son should choose a wife from among them evidently is the fact that it is a disobeying of the divine injunction. But the son is headstrong in his infatuation, while the parents are fondly weak, and so the passion of the

one and the yielding compliance of the other two, though unknown to either of them, became the means of carrying out the will of the Lord who "sought an occasion against the Philistines," and who can make the turbulent passion of this young giant — who does not know how to deny himself — to praise him as readily as he can "the wrath of man." The "occasion" came in the guise of a riddle at the marriage feast. 14: 12–18. The base character of the people with whom he had just formed such close relations is well shown in their underhanded method of finding out the riddle by compelling the bride by threats of burning to wile the secret from Samson himself. Though he understands how they come by it, instead of regarding himself as loosed from his obligations, as well he might have done, he is still held by a fanciful sense of honor, and goes down to Ashkelon, slays thirty wealthy Philistines, and carries their changes of garments to his wedding companions, and thus contemptuously redeems his pledge. Then, enraged at the treachery of his wife, he returns to his father's house. He has redeemed his pledge, but it is at the expense of the tribal kindred of the men who reached his secret through unfair means. The fact that he had so many bridal attendants and gave such a feast shows that his family was sufficiently wealthy for him easily to have paid the forfeit himself. That he did not do so indicates how thoroughly he was angered. This slaying of thirty Philistines, though it was a vengeful freak, yet was the beginning of the career for which he was chosen. He was hastened on in it by the fact that when he returned again to his wife when his anger had cooled, he found her given to one of his bridal companions. Then he seeks a new revenge. This time he secures three hundred jackals, ties them together in couples by their tails, between which he puts a fire-brand, and sends them out into the standing harvests of his enemies. When the Philistines find out who has done this deed and the reason of its performance, they take revenge, not upon him, but upon the unsuspecting wife and father-in-law. This leads him again to gird himself for another retaliatory stroke, and he smites them "hip and thigh with a great slaughter."

A vengeance so marked as this made it impossible for the Philistines longer to ignore Samson. They gather in battle array. The Israelites, instead of seeing in this remarkable man one who might deliver them, are terrified at this hostile army, and three thousand of them go down to the rock Etam, to the top of which Samson had retreated, to bind him and deliver him over to their enemies. Strange that Israelitish heroism should have ever turned into metal so base — that its faith had become so dim as to be unable to see what they might have done against this foe with Samson for a leader! The graphic narrative in 15: 9–19 tells the result of this pusillanimous act, and exhibits the literal fulfillment of the promise that "one should chase a thousand." The miracle that was performed to assuage his thirst after his great exertions is liable to be misunderstood. The place where the incident occurred was called Ramath-lehi —Hill of the Jaw-Bone. 15: 17. When, therefore, it is said that "God clave an hollow place that was in the *jaw*, and there came water thereout," reference is had to some little depression in this Hill of the Jaw, instead of a tooth socket in the jaw bone as has sometimes been supposed.

The Gaza Feat.—16: 1–3. Effort has been made to relieve the character of Samson from the imputation that is cast upon it by the common interpretation of the first verse in this chapter. It is said that it does not necessarily imply any sensual act on his part, for the Hebrew word translated "harlot" may mean either that or the keeper of an inn, and that it was frequently customary for harlots to keep an inn, as in the case of Rahab. It is urged that no suspicion attached to the spies who passed the

night in *her* house, and that Samson, being in a hostile city, would have no place to abide unless he went to such an inn. But in the case of the spies it is distinctly stated that they went to the house of Rahab and "lodged there." Here the expression is very different. Sad as it is to say, it is in accord with other acts of his life, and if we could rub out this stain upon it, we should improve it but little, for there remains the still worse blot cast upon it by his relations with Delilah. The plain speech of Scripture in relation to the acts of its heroes is in notable contrast to the way in which some expositors have sought to cover them up.

The carrying away of the gates was a piece of grim humor as well as a display of remarkable strength. The chagrin of the city and of those who lay in wait can readily be imagined. Besides it was a national humiliation. The gates of the chief city of the Philistines lay before Hebron, the chief city of the tribe of Judah.

His Fall.—16: 4–21. Nothing can add to the effect of the Scriptural narrative of that sad drama. The Philistines supposed that his strength lay in some charm or some amulet hidden about his person, and through Delilah they sought to obtain possession of it. It would seem as if his first experience with a Philistine woman would have put him on his guard against the wiles of this one, and as if each successive effort of hers to entrap his strength would have made him increasingly careful. But it did not. A bird under the fascination of a snake makes no more futile effort at escape than did he. Even in his "lies" he dallies with the real truth. "If they bind me," he says, "with seven green withs (animal tendons) that were never dried, then shall I be weak as another man." His own hair was braided into seven locks and hence his selection of that number. His next subterfuge is in "new ropes that were never occupied." And here again he plays with his secret, burying it in an enigma, for he refers again to his hair, which had never been touched. His third evasion is but a thin veiling of the real truth, for this time he informs her that his strength is in his hair, and if she imprisons that in a web she will imprison his strength also. If she had been a woman of wit she would have had his secret in the power of her guess, after the failure of this last test, though she had failed in all further effort with Samson himself, for she had but to put the three riddles together in order to obtain an easy solution of them all, for in the three he had clearly shown that his strength lay in the—*seven—untouched —locks of his hair.* Folly so pre-eminent—that would dally with a secret so sacred—deserved to fall. Delilah was stronger than Samson.

His Death Triumph.—Samson's strength lay not in his hair—it lay in the fact of his Nazaritish consecration, of which his long hair was the sign. When that was cut off, his Nazarite condition, for the time, was ended, and, on that account his strength was withdrawn. Samson, who seems to have come to trust only in the length of his hair, had ample time to realize his error, as in prison he performed the most servile task to which his enemies could have put him. 21. "It is better," quaintly says Bishop Hall, "for Samson to be blind in prison than to abuse his eyes in Sorek; yea, I may safely say, he was more blind when he saw licentiously than now that he sees not; neither could he see how ill he had done till he saw not." With the growth of his hair comes back the sign of Nazarite condition, and so his strength comes with it.

His enemies have made a great sacrifice to Dagon, to whose power they ascribe their victory over Samson. Dagon was an idol with the head and hands of a man and the tail of a fish, and represented the vivifying influences of water. Temples were built to him in Gaza and Ashdod. 1 Sam. 5: 6; 1 Chr. 10: 10. Alargatis or Decerto was the kindred female deity. When the hearts of his worshipers "were merry" they brought forth Samson

"to make sport for them"—by making sport of him. But how harmlessly their shafts fall down! The man has been new-armored in his prison experience. He stands before them now purified of his weaknesses—a blind hero. He has learned in those dismal depths once more to pray. Three times does he beseech Jehovah, and then seizing the two pillars upon which rests the roof of the temple bend his vast renewed strength against them. As the startled spectators behold the first dimly perceptible swaying of the pillars the mockings cease, the laugh suddenly dies, the jests are cut off in mid utterance, but before they can recover from their stupefaction, or make effort to escape, their terrible doom descends upon them, and they and their conqueror both lay smitten in the ruins.

REMARKS.—Samson's character, as has been seen, is by no means perfect. His strength was physical only. His passions were ungovernable, and there is nothing in his life except his last act that would redeem it from dishonor. It has probably occurred ere this to every one studying these pages how apparently irreconcilable his life is with the circumstances of his pre-natal choice. The matter has been a great puzzle to us. To make the facts conform to the theory of his birth and of his Nazariteship has caused many a conscientious commentator, as it seems to us, to warp the facts. But they stand out in the Scripture account unmistakably plain. Allowing them to be as they there appear, the only satisfactory solution of the problem, as it seems to us, is that God only chose him "to begin to deliver Israel." Further than the fulfillment of that expressed intention, his pre-natal choice has nothing to do. His Nazariteship and his long hair were the signs of such a divine mission, and not the guaranty of a stainless life. Further, it may be, that the contrasts in his life—between his consecration and his acts—his paroxysmal strength and his spiritual weakness—his hostility to the Philistines, and his being put into their power through his lusts—perhaps all these are presented to the Israelites as an epitome in one life of all their previous dealings with this people. Like Samson they had been consecrated to the Lord—like him they had gone astray. Like Samson they had known what it was when they relied upon the Lord for one to chase a thousand and two to put ten thousand to flight, and, like him, after the conflict was over they had permitted their enemies to shear away their strength in Jehovah. Like Samson they had every reason to hate the Philistines, and yet they had suffered themselves to be led away by their lusts and be bound by them. And their final deliverance was to be as indicated in the last mighty act of Samson—*in the destruction of Dagon and his temple.*

Side-light Truths.

1—"Above all we can ask or think" is the assurance given—not to prayer as an experiment to see whether it will be answered or no, but to simple, childlike faith. Ps. 84:11; 86:15; John 4:10; 14:16, 17; Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 1:19, 20; 3:14–20; Col. 1:29.

2.—How much better to be able to say, like Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have *finished* my course, I have kept the faith," than, like Samson, only to be able to say, "I have begun to deliver Israel." The secret of Paul's triumphant retrospect lay in the fact that all his Christian life had been thoroughly consecrated to God, while Samson had not made such a spirit consecration. The secret, then, of our success will be in such a consecration. Let not our lives be failures. Luke 6:47–49; John 13:7; 15:5; 2 Cor. 12:9; Jas. 1:22; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 John 2:5, 6; 3:18, 19.

3.—Dally not with sin—look not on it—pass by it. Consider not yourself stronger than other men who have been tempted and have fallen. Resist the devil and you are his conqueror—parley with him and he is yours. Ps. 1:1; Prov. 1:10; 4:14, 15; 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Tim, 2:16, 18.

4.—How long it takes for us to learn that we should be diligent in the care of

our hearts and that they are safe only in the Lord's keeping! And how much he has done to enable us to resist temptation. Eph. 6:11; 1 Pet. 5:8, 9; 2 Cor. 2:11; Luke 22:31, 32; John 17:9, 11, 15; Heb. 9:25.

5.—If we have sinned like Samson, let us repent like him, and God will abundantly pardon. Ex. 34:6, 7; 2 Chr. 7:14; Is. 43:25; 55:7; Hos. 14:1, 2; Micah 7:18, 19; Rom. 5:20; Eph. 1:7, 8; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16.

HYMN.

My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

Ne'er think the victory won
Nor lay thine armor down;
Thy arduous work will not be done
Till thou obtain thy crown.

BLACKBOARD.

SAMSON the STRONG
WAS
SAMSON the WEAK
BECAUSE
GOD was not his STRENGTH.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—One day an angel came down to earth with a message for an Israelitish woman, the wife of a good man called Manoah. If he had appeared to her in his shining robes, so unspeakably bright, she would only have been frightened and thought she was going to die. So he appeared to her as a man, but so superior to men ordinarily that she told her husband that she had seen "a man of God," and that his face was like the face of an angel. Manoah and his wife had no children, and the angel came to tell her—tell the little ones what the angel told to the wife—how she told it to the husband—the prayer of Manoah that *he* might see this man of God—how the prayer was answered—the conversation—how Manoah and his wife discovered that this "man of God" was really an angel—the birth of the child and what they called him. The births of two other children were foretold in a similar way—John the Baptist and Jesus. See Luke 1.

2.—Tell the incidents of his life—how, when a young man, he rent the lion as he would rend a kid—his ill-chosen marriage—his slaying of a thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass—his taking away of the gates of Gaza—the story of his fall.

3.—The great strength that he had was given because God chose him to begin to deliver Israel, and because he was to be holy unto Him all his life long. His long hair was the sign that God was with him. When Samson told Delilah about it and she cut off his hair, God departed from him and his strength of course left him also. Make the point that Samson fell *because he played with sin.* Then tell of his prison—how that brought repentance, and how his strength became back when he became once more a Nazarite. That is the way with us—strong in Christ—weak out of him. But though Samson repented he never could get back his two eyes. Sin leaves its mark even although we may be sorry for it. Tell of his final triumph over his enemies, and how, through his repentance, God at last "began to deliver Israel" as he had promised.

HYMN.

We are little, and our foes,
Like Philistines, gather round,
How shall we, so weak and small,
Able be to hold our ground?

Though your foes are thick and great
Christ will sure deliver thee.
If you trust in him, your strength
Greater will than Samson's be.

BLACKBOARD.

SAMSON, THOUGH HE
CONQUERED AN ARMY,
WAS CONQUERED
BY SIN.
"Resist the Devil and he will Flee from you."

LESSON XIX.—MAY 9, 1875.—RUTH AND NAOMI.

SCRIPTURE.—Ruth **1: 16-22.** Commit **16-18**; Primary Verse, **16.**

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—RUTH 1: 16.

TOPIC.—"THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST."

HOME READINGS.

M. Ruth 1: 1-22.....Naomi Changed into Mara.
T. Ruth 2: 1-23.....The Generous Landlord and the Humble Gleaner.
W. Ruth 3: 1-18.....The Meeting of Piety and Innocence.
Th. Ruth 4: 1-22.....Unselfish Love Rewarded.
F. 2 K. 2: 1-15.....Elisha's Persevering Devotion.
S. Luke 14: 26-33.....The Forsaking of All.
S. Matt. 19: 16-30.....The Hundred-fold Reward.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS

THE SORROWFUL FAMILY.—1: 1-22. Who was Elimelech? 1, 2. Where did he live? How many boys did he have? Where did he go with his family? Why? What happened to him after he got there? What became of his sons? 4, 5. What were the names of their widows? What did Naomi do after the death of her husband and sons? 6, 7. When on the road to Judah what did she say to her daughters-in-law? 8, 9. What reply did they make? 10. What answer did Naomi make? 11-13. What did Orpah do? 14. What did Ruth do and say? 14-17. Did Naomi yield? 18. When they came to Bethlehem what happened? 19. What was Naomi's reply?

THE HUMBLE GLEANER.—2: 1-23. When Naomi and Ruth came back they were very poor. How did Ruth propose to earn their living? 2. In whose field did she happen to come? 3. Who was he? 1. How did Boaz treat her? 5-17. Read Deut. 24: 19; Lev. 19: 9, 10; 23: 22, and see whether Ruth had a right to glean in his field? Do you think he did anything more for her than merely to give her what she had a right to? What sort of a man do you think Boaz was? How long did Ruth glean in the fields of Boaz? 23.

A RIGHT CLAIMED.—3: 1-18. Read Deut. 25: 5, 6 and see what Ruth's right was. Read Deut. 25: 7-9 and see what she could do in case he refused. Read Deut. 25: 10 and see what he would be called if she did the last. Now read 3: 1-18 and see how Ruth claimed her right and had it allowed.

THE RIGHT REDEEMED. — Naomi had been

compelled by poverty to sell her inheritance. 4: 3. Read Lev. 25: 25. Was there any nearer kinsman than Boaz? 3: 12, 13. In chapter 4: 1–12 you will find an account of the way that Boaz took to find out whether the next of kin would do his duty by Naomi and Ruth. What was the result? What did he take off his shoe and give it to Boaz for? Did Boaz marry Ruth? What did the neighbors think of Ruth? 3: 11; 4: 14, 15. Ruth became the mother of whom? 17. Of whom was Obed the grandfather? 17. Christ was called a Son — of whom? Luke 18: 38.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE BOOK. — For some time past our study has led us into the midst of conflicts. In this book, instead of the clash of arms, we hear the salutations of the reapers and the pleasant rustle of harvest-fields, and look only upon a peaceful, domestic scene. Instead of Valor now we behold Virtue. "The Book of Judges tells of a prophetess who was as strong as a man, the Book of Ruth of a man who was as tender as a woman." Heretofore our admiration has been excited by valiant deeds done to emancipate a nation: in this we are attracted by the beauty of a life that does not hesitate to sacrifice itself for the sake of one. But the gentle Ruth wins her victories as well as the mighty men of war of whom we have been learning, and has her rewards as well as they have theirs. She indeed is lifted from poverty to affluence, from the uncertain, compromising position of a foreigner to a recognized place in the household of Israel of great influence, but, after all, her greatest achievement is over the hearts of her adopted people. Gideon and Jephthah and Samson win their scepters by rough deeds of war; she wins hers by gentle ministries of love. Their dominion is the dominion of superior courage and success in war; hers is the uncompelled fealty of the heart. Though the book bears the name of Ruth, yet, after all, it is the story of Naomi. It is the story of her fortunes from first to last that is told, from the graphic setting forth of her desolation in the first chapter to the congratulations given her by her town's-women in the last: "Blessed be the Lord which hath not left *thee* this day without a kinsman" etc. But though it is a narration of Naomi and though Naomi shows that she also is a lovely and exalted character, yet the popular judgment, as well as the judgment of the inspired writer, goes unerringly by her and selects Ruth as the one to wear the chaplet of honor in the naming of the book. And so of Ruth it may be said as it is of another beautifully unselfish woman: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

THE SORROWFUL FAMILY.—1: 1-22. The first chapter gives a very affecting account of the ruin and desolation that came to a once happy and prosperous home. Elimelech of Bethlehem, on account of a famine, went with Naomi, his wife, and two sons, Chilion and Mahlon, to the land of Moab. They went to escape from a hard lot, but met a fate still harder. First the husband and father died. Then the sons married daughters of the Moabites, Orpah and Ruth, and after dwelling happily with them (8) for ten years, they also died. By this last stroke Naomi was not only triply bereaved, but found herself in great destitution in a strange land. Naturally, now that husband and sons were taken away, would she think of the land of her birth. Necessity re-enforces her natural longings, and so she turns her steps homeward. Her two daughters-in-law accompany her to the great highway between Moab and Judah, possibly only with the intention at first to see her part way on her journey. Then comes the scene of parting. In this it is evident that they must have lived happily together; for the sincere sorrow manifested by Orpah as well as Ruth at the prospect of separation is eloquent of their affectionate devotion to each other in the

past. Though Mahlon and Chilion chose their wives among foreigners contrary to the spirit, though not the letter, of their law, (Deut. 7:1, 3, 4,) yet they chose two of such lovely characters that it might well be doubted as to whether the law in its spirit or letter was aimed at such as they. Naomi bids them go back, and when they both refuse she sets before them how hard and hopeless will be their lot in Israel, if they insist on going with her. Marriage in those times was such an absolute necessity to women for comfort, protection, and position, that one was esteemed most unfortunate who could not find "rest" in the house of a husband. Even in their own land surrounded by relatives and friends, Orpah and Ruth were at great disadvantage so long as they remained unmarried. This would be greatly increased in a strange country. And Naomi, while she shows them that she would be glad to give them other sons for husbands if she had them, in this delicate way intimates that other Israelites do not feel as she does toward them, and that in Israel they might look in vain for husbands. Orpah feels the full force of what she says and turns away. Ruth still cleaves to her mother-in-law. Without fully realizing it, the two had made a most momentous decision. Said Naomi to Ruth: "Behold thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people *and unto her gods.*" Ruth's declaration was: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, *and thy God, my God.*" It was not merely a question of duty to a mother-in-law, but, also, as to whether they would follow the true God or not. The result of that choice was that one attained an earthly as well as a heavenly immortality, while the other is heard of no more. She who regarded not her own life, kept it unto life eternal, while she who thought only of saving it lost it altogether.

Can anything be more touching than the account of Naomi's return home? "All the city was moved about them and they said: *'Is this Naomi?'*" There is a world of pity in that exclamation. She went away so happy, so enviable, so rich in home-wealth, and now she comes back so poor, so bereaved, so dispirited, no wonder they said: "Is this Naomi?" "Call me not Naomi," meaning *pleasant*, she says; "Call me Mara," meaning *bitter*, "for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me. I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing that the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me."

THE GLEANING.—2:1-23. A pleasant farm scene is given us in the second chapter. There are reapers cutting the grain with their sickles, maidens binding the cut grain into sheaves, an overseer to watch and stimulate their labors (5); water-vessels near by where the heated toilers may quench their thirst, and the simple noon-day meal of parched grain and bread soaked in vinegar. 14.

One can not but admire and inwardly commend the provisions made for the poor by the Levitical law. Care for them was not left to the occasional generosity of the rich, but it was made obligatory upon every one not wholly to reap the corners of his field, nor gather the gleanings of his harvest, nor pluck all the grapes of his vineyard, nor if a sheaf were forgotten was he to go back for it, nor should he beat the branches of his olive trees a second time. All these leavings were to be for the poor, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. Lev. 19:9, 10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19–21. The command was especially potent on account of the reason upon which it was based: "and thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondsman in Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing." Deut. 24:18, 22.

Ruth, then, went into the harvest-field under the protection of this law. With its provisions she must have become acquainted through Naomi. But a technical right in such a place

would not be enough to a nature like hers, which would esteem the spirit of permission given her far more than the letter of the law that compelled it. Gifts and rights even may be flung into one's face as though they were insults. Sneers and coarse jests, or sullen acquiescence in her presence even, would drive a woman like Ruth from the field. It was a fear of some such treatment, and not a doubt of her right, that led Ruth to say to Naomi: "Let me now go to the field and glean after him *in whose sight I shall find grace.*" The act itself was humiliation enough without gleaning in a field where no kindness would be shown to her. And to understand how humiliating it was, and what an act of self-sacrifice on her part, one has but to remember that Ruth had formerly lived in comfort, knowing nothing of poverty; had left her own country where she had friends in abundance who would have seen that she lacked nothing; that her destitution had come upon her in consequence of her affection for her mother-in-law; and that to go and glean in the harvest fields of Israel was to meet the half pity and half contempt usually bestowed upon foreigners. Her unselfish devotion to Naomi must have been very great to have compelled her first to make the proposal.

It was her "hap" to light on one of the fields of Boaz. Boaz, we are told, was a kinsman of Naomi's, and "a mighty man of wealth." The character of Boaz is as strongly as it is artlessly exhibited. His salutation to the reapers (4), though then, probably, a common oriental salutation, is so sincere that the inspired writer thought it worthy of being put on record. He is so familiarly acquainted with his laborers that he quickly notices the presence of a stranger. The "poor and the stranger and the widow and the fatherless" can not come into his field to avail themselves of their right under the law without his kindly notice. When told by his overseer who Ruth was, he follows his first generous impulse to be specially kind to this lonesome foreigner, and see that she has the unusual opportunity of following with the other maidens right after the reapers; bids her not to go into any other field where she may not be so kindly treated; gives strict instructions to the young men to be in no way rude to her; and at the noon-day meal sets them the example of respectful treatment by helping her himself to parched corn. He does not treat her as a Moabitish beggar, deserving only of scant courtesy, but as one who has heard her story and honors her for what she has done and is doing. His own sincere piety instantly recognized her's. So he tries to smooth her way for her, and so aids her by private instructions to his workmen that she is able to carry home at night "an ephah"—about three pecks—of barley. To Ruth this matter of meeting with Boaz was a mere chance—to Naomi it seemed ordered of the Lord. And on that account it was that she advised Ruth to glean with the maidens of Boaz until the end of the harvest.

ANOTHER RIGHT.—There was another right to which Ruth was entitled. If a man died without issue it was decreed that his wife should not marry a stranger, but that his brother should take her to wife in order that the name of the dead should not "be put out of Israel." The child of such an union succeeded to the dead man's estate, and took his place in the household of Israel. If the brother refused to marry her, he was first to be reprimanded by "the elders of his city," and then if he still refused, the widow in their presence, took his shoe off his foot and spit in his face, saying: "So shall it be done to that man that will not build up his brother's house." "And his name shall be called in Israel: The House of Him that hath His Shoe Loosed." Deut. 25: 5–10.

If it were hard for Ruth to assert the right of "the poor and the stranger" in the harvest field, infinitely harder must it have been for her to follow the instructions of Naomi and lay claim to the right of marriage. The disabilities which

oppressed her as a widow, and the distressful condition in which Naomi was placed, impel her to an act which in these times it is hard to regard except as immodest. Even in those days when in popular estimation it would have been so much more lightly regarded, Boaz feels it necessary to send Ruth home before it is light enough for anybody to distinguish her, so that there might be no misinterpretation of her visit. The more danger there was of such misconstruction the more reluctance of course would be felt by Ruth in entering into Naomi's plan, and the more accurate is our measure of the distress that led her to so bold a deed. These two women have no doubt of the purity of Boaz any more than they have of their own innocence.

The proceeding was one to appeal most strongly to an Oriental. It and the speech of Ruth are symbolic. She does not directly ask the boon she came for—holding to her modesty even in this strange situation. "Spread thy skirt over thy hand-maid, for thou art a near kinsman" is the way in which she prefers her request. She does not claim an Israelitish right as a Moabitess, it will be noticed, but as one who considers herself, in her renunciation of her own people and their gods, wholly an Israelite. Boaz is quick to interpret her symbolic act and speech. His reply shows that he has been thinking about the duty which the kinsmen of Elimelech owe to her and to Naomi. He seems to have been hindered from making a voluntary offer to fulfil the obligation, first, because he was an old man, and it was natural that Ruth should desire to mate with younger men; second, there was a nearer kinsman than himself; and, third Ruth's right was so unimpeachable that no taint of immodesty could attach to her for making known her desire to have it satisfied, and so it belonged to her to indicate whether or not she wished to have it carried out. There was real delicacy on his part as well as on her's. Advanced in years, he felt for her the solicitude and affection that a father might feel for a daughter. And yet, if in order to be of help to her, he should offer to fulfill the duty of a kinsman, he, apparently, was afraid that the suggestion and the opportunity might force her into an uncongenial marriage. But upon this intimation from her of her wishes, he shows to her that his consent is no unwilling one, and that he considers that she is conferring a favor upon him instead of he upon her. Conscientious, however, in all things, he will do nothing until this nearer kinsman has had the opportunity that belongs to him to take or reject. The scene takes place on a "threshing-floor," which was simply a plot of ground beaten hard like a floor.

THE KINSMAN'S OPPORTUNITY.—4: 1–12. Boaz, "as energetic as he was kind," set off early the next morning to Bethlehem. As indicated in the verses specified, his intention was to bring his kinsman to a sort of public trial, so that, in relation to the "inheritance" of which he might become the life possessor by its redemption and his marriage with Ruth, the mouth of this kinsman might be forever estopped. This man was apparently a conscientious man, for there is no hesitation in regard to his redemption of the land for Naomi's sake. It does not militate against such a conclusion that when it came to fulfilling the law with relation to Ruth that he suddenly swerves aside from his duty. Ruth is a foreigner, a Moabitess, concerning whom he probably knows nothing except by hearsay, and against whom he has the national Israelitish prejudice. If she had been an Israelite there is no doubt but what he would have fulfilled the letter of the law. As it is he is shocked by the idea of such a marriage, and does not consider that the law bids him to enter into it. He is afraid "to mar his inheritance"—not by the loss of dollars and cents, but by the stain that this, in his estimation, would bring upon his uncontaminated pedigree. "He is unwilling," says Cassel, "to endanger his name and inheritance—and history

does not even know his name!" "So he drew off his shoe" and gave it to Boaz as a sign that he transferred his right to him. The shoe "symbolized a possession which one actually had and could tread with his feet." When he entered into possession conjointly with another he "put his foot in the same shoe." By giving his shoe to Boaz, the kinsman, signified that he surrendered the right to put his foot upon the inheritance of Elimelech. When the widow, in the case before referred to, pulled off the shoe of the recreant brother, it was a public, degrading act, signifying that the right to put his foot upon his brother's inheritance had been taken away from him. The trial, as was the custom, was in the "gate" of the city, and the ten elders were probably the official "witnesses" required.

THE RECORD.—The marriage between Ruth and Boaz was duly solemnized. It is plain from the benedictions that were pronounced upon it by the towns-people that they did not share the prejudice of the kinsman with respect, at least, to Ruth. Her loving, unselfish devotion had not only won for her a husband and a home, but the hearts of the people beside. And a still farther honor was reserved for her. The genealogical record given in the closing part of the chapter states that her child was the grandfather of David, and so she comes into the royal line whose kingliness reached its climax in Christ the Son of God. It was not for naught, then, that she gave up her own country, her own people and their gods, for by that sacrifice she became, in one sense, the mother of the living God. And in this respect she was like Tamar, the Canaanitish woman, and Rahab, the harlot—the three taken up out of the filth of their surroundings to shine as gems in the crown of Jehovah.

Side-light Truths.

1.—What potent power there is in unselfish love. It is the one on which God relies to overcome the world. Jer. 31:3, John 3:6; 6:44; 12:32; Rom. 5:7, 8, 18; Eph. 2:4, 5; Jas. 2:8.

2.—The lesson of humility—hard for the world to learn, but indispensable for the Christian. Matt. 11:29; 18:4; 20:26, 27; 23:11, 12; Mark 9:35; 10:42–45; Luke 22:25–27; John 13:14, 15; Phil. 2:3–9: Heb. 5:8; 1 Pet. 5:3.

3.—In ten years "Naomi" was changed into "Mara." We should put our trust and our comfort in something better than earthly riches that so readily vanish away. Job. 1:14–17; Prov. 23:5; Matt. 6:20; Luke 12:33; Col. 3:1–4; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10, 17; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 5:2, 3.

4.—The care of the poor is to us a sacred legacy. As Bishop Hall says: "If the rich can exchange their alms with the poor for blessings, they have no cause to complain of an ill bargain." Deut. 15:7–11; Job. 29:11–16; Ps. 41 1; Prov. 14:21; 19:17; 28:27; Is. 58:10, 11; Matt. 25:40; Luke 14:13, 14; Acts 20:35; 2 Cor. 8:9.

5.—What a bargain Ruth made! She gave up her country and her gods for a home in Israel, a glorious immortality here and hereafter, and a place in the royal line of Christ. She bargained idols for Jehovah, and rags for royalty—a bargain repeated every time that a sinner exchanges his sins for Christ's salvation. Is. 52:3; 55:1, 2; Ps. 49:7, 8; Prov. 3:13–17; Matt. 16:26; 13:44; Luke 9:25; Eph. 2:8; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rev. 3:18.

HYMN.

Just as I am — without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind.
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee I find.
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee whose blood can cleanse each spot;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

BLACKBOARD.

RUTH'S BARGAIN
IS THE
SINNER'S BARGAIN:
MOAB for ISRAEL,
IDOLS for GOD,
POVERTY for RICHES,
RAGS for ROYAL ROBES,
LIFE for IMMORTALITY,
HELL for HEAVEN.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

We have a story in the life of Ruth that will fascinate the smallest child. Tell it as graphically as you can, pausing after each section of the narrative to recall it by question from your class. Use the following outline only as a help to memory in telling the facts in their order.

1.— Famine in Canaan — Elimelech with his wife Naomi and his two boys, Mahlon and Chilion, to escape it go to Moab (show where Moab is) — death of Elimelech — marriage of sons — their death—poverty and desolation of Naomi —her return home—the choice of Orpah and Ruth — magnitude of their decision —which way are *you* going?— toward the world or toward Canaan?— arrival at Bethlehem — the wonder and pity of the people.

2.—Ruth's brave effort to support her mother-in-law by gleaning — the law about gleaning — happens to get into the field of Boaz, a wealthy relation of Naomi's — character of Boaz as shown in his salutation to the reapers, and his notice of this new gleaner — his kindness to her—his instructions to the reapers concerning her — gleans in his field to end of harvest.

3.— Ruth's right of marriage — asks of Boaz that it be fulfilled — Boaz's reply — the trial of the near kinsman at the gate — marriage of Ruth and Boaz— the record that shows that she was an ancestress of Christ — love rewarded.

HYMN.

Ruth left her idols and her home —
Worshiped no more a senseless clod,
And found herself — as we may find —
Encircled by the arms of God.

BLACKBOARD.

RUTH left her IDOLS
AND
FOUND—GOD.

LESSON XX.—MAY 16, 1875.—A PRAYING MOTHER.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel 1 : 21-28. Commit 21-28; Primary Verse 27.

21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.

22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever.

23 And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the Lord establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young.

25 And he slew a bullock and brought the child to Eli.

26 And she said, O my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

27 For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

28 Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshiped the Lord there.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."—1 SAM. 1:28.

TOPIC.—EARLY CONSECRATION.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Num.**	**30 : 1-16**	**The Law of the Vow.**
T.	**Gen.**	**25 : 20-26**	**The Birth of Jacob.**
W.	**Ex.**	**2 : 1-10**	**The Birth of Moses.**
Th.	**Judges**	**13 : 1-25**	**The Birth of Samson.**
F.	**Luke**	**1 : 5-25**	**The Birth of John.**
S.	**Luke**	**1 : 26-38**	**The Birth of Jesus.**
S.	**1 Sam.**	**2 : 1-10**	**Hannah's Song.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE YEARLY JOURNEY.—Who was Elkanah? 1. Where did he go to worship? 3. How often? Whom did he take with him? 4, 5, 21. Do you think that parents only should worship God? Why did he go to Shiloh to worship? Deut. 12: 11-14; Josh. 18: 1. What other eminent man used to have a yearly feast? 1 Sam. 20: 6.

HANNAH'S DESIRE.—Who was Hannah? 1, 2. Did Elkanah have any other wife? What was her name? Was it permitted to have more than one wife? Deut. 21: 15. Look at 1 Sam. 25: 42, 43; 1 Chr. 4: 5; 8: 8; 2 Chr. 24: 3, and see what other well-known persons had more than one wife. Did Hannah have any children? Did Peninnah? Which did Elkanah love best? 5. Did Hannah and Peninnah get along well together? 6, 7. What did Hannah want? Did Elkanah understand why Hannah wept? 8. Look at Ex. 23: 26; Deut. 7: 14; 28: 4, and see what peculiar blessing was promised to the Israelites if they would serve God.

THE SILENT PRAYER.—When Hannah felt so badly, where and to whom did she go for relief and comfort? 9, 10. What did she do? 10. What did she pray for? 11. Did she pray aloud? 13. What promise did she make to the Lord if he would hear and answer her prayer? 11. Of whom else have you learned whose hair was not to be cut? Judg. 13: 5. Any one else? Such a person was called what? What did Eli think was the matter with her? 14. Why did he think so? 12, 13. How did Hannah answer? 15, 16. Did this satisfy Eli? 17. Who was Eli? 2: 11; 4: 18. Were his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas good men? 2: 12. What did Eli say to Hannah? 17. Did she "go in peace"? 18.

FAITH'S REWARD.—Do you think Hannah believed that her prayer would be answered? 18. *Was* it answered? 20. Why did she call his name Samuel? 20. Did Hannah go up to Shiloh the year that Samuel was born? 22. Did Elkanah? Why did she stay home? When did she go? 24. What did she take with her? What did she mean to do with Samuel? 22. What did she do with him? 25-28. Did his mother ever have anything more to do with him? 2: 19. Did Hannah after she gave this child away ever have any more? 2: 21.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE BOOK.—The average reader probably has often been puzzled with the addition to the title: "Otherwise called the First Book of Kings." The latter is the title found in the Septuagint and Vulgate versions of the Bible. Either appellation has a special fitness, according to the way in which the book is viewed. The Book of Judges, it will be remembered, as an explanation of the

degeneracy of the times, had the frequent exclamation: "In those days there was no King in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." If the present book be regarded with reference to those times, and as a continuation of the history therein commenced, the title of "Kings" properly belongs to this book. Also, if it be considered only with respect to its being a history of the establishment of monarchical rule, then the appellation is appropriate, and, as the division between Second Samuel and the First Book of Kings is purely arbitrary, there is nothing in the nature of the case to prevent this way of designating the books. But if it be regarded as a special history, the coloring of which is due to the character of Samuel, then its present preferred title properly retains its place, the same as the names of Joshua and of Ruth stand unquestioned at the head of the historical books of their times. The Jews adopted this latter designation and in their Scriptures the two books of Samuel form but one.

The mission of Samuel appears to have been to prepare the way for the throne of David, and, so, of that greater throne of which Christ should be the occupant. Of all the divisions of the two books that we have seen, none seem to us better than this: I. 1-12, history of Samuel, including Eli's judgeship; II. 13-15, Saul's reign; III. 16-24, history of David—a history not completed, except in the second chapter of the First Book of Kings. In this division the boundaries are not distinctly final in each case, the history of the individuals being carried on into the succeeding sections. All that is meant by it is, that, in each instance, the persons named are then the central figures of the history. On account of the wording of 1 Chr. 29:29, it was once currently supposed that the first twenty-four chapters were written by Samuel himself, (his death is recorded in the twenty-fifth), and that Gad and Nathan wrote the remainder. Now the received opinion is that originally several writers, contemporaneous with Samuel, furnished the material which was put into its present shape by a later compiler. It should not escape the attention of teachers, that these books furnish the Key to the Book of Psalms, an intelligent reading of which is impossible without the historical light which they turn upon it.

THE YEARLY JOURNEY.—3-5, 21 Elkanah's yearly pilgrimage to Shiloh was in obedience to the command given in Deut. 12:11-14; the "place" there referred to being located at Shiloh as recorded in Josh. 18:1. At the three great feasts only the *males* were *commanded* to be present, the females not being compelled to attend, probably on account of their domestic cares and their comparative inability to endure the fatigue and exposure of such journeys. Nevertheless it became quite customary for all the members of a family to be present, especially at the passover; of which we have a notable instance in Luke 2:41, 42. While this, as has been conjectured, may have been the passover, to which Elkanah took his wives and children, yet Deut. 12:11-14 seems to provide for joyful family sacrificial feasts, differing from the three great feasts of the Jews, and such as David yearly observed at Bethlehem. 1 Sam. 20:6. It is likely that it was such a joyful occasion that was yearly kept by Elkanah. From the fact that there was a sacrifice first and a feast afterwards, it is inferred that the main features of the event was a "peace offering," in which part of the sacrifice was returned to the one who offered it, and eaten by him. So the "portions" given by Elkanah to the members of his family were portions of the sacrifice, and the feast was, in fact, a communion meal. The "worthy" portion, by which he distinguished his partiality for Hannah, was simply a "double" portion. In some such way Joseph showed to Benjamin special honor. Gen. 43:34. And Samuel distinguished Saul in a similar manner by giving what, probably, was his own portion as a priest. 1 Sam.

9: 22-24. Of Elkanah whose name signifies *whom God provided*, nothing more is known than is told in this chapter. Ramathaim-zophim, where he lived, is the duplication of Ramah and means "*the two hills*," and was probably called so from its situation. It must have been near Bethlehem.

HANNAH'S DESIRE.—1-10. Polygamy, though permitted under the Old Testament dispensation (Deut. 21: 15) frequently bore its inevitable bitter fruit in the dissensions that arose between the wives, even in the families of the very elect. Of this, the case before us is a striking example, and so, also, is that in Gen. 21: 9-14. In the present instance, the barrenness of Hannah is made the subject of cruel taunts by Peninnah. To understand fully the writhing of Hannah under the tongue-lashings of her rival, it is necessary to know how ardently and for what reasons maternity was coveted by every Hebrew woman. One of the special blessings pronounced upon the Jews, conditioned on their serving Jehovah, was that none among them should be barren—man nor beast. Ex. 23: 26; Deut. 7: 14; 28: 4; Ps. 107: 38. The possession of children therefore, came to be regarded as a mark of divine favor, and barrenness as a token of God's anger, and as being the heaviest punishment that he could inflict. By children was the house to be built up and the name of the family perpetuated. They were a crown of honor to their parents. Ps. 127: 3-5. The longing for them was intense. Isaac "entreated" the Lord for Rebekah because she was barren. Gen. 25: 21. Rachel cried "Give me children or I die." Gen. 30: 1. Jephthah's daughter regarded as the hardest part of her hard fate, that she was to be cut off before she had become a mother in Israel, and sought and obtained permission to wander up and down on the mountains, bewailing her virginity. Judg. 11: 37, 40. Elizabeth, for a long time barren, when she was about to become the mother of John the Baptist, declared that the Lord had at last taken away her "reproach among men," and, when the child was born "her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, and they rejoiced with her." Luke 1: 24, 25, 57, 58. Rather than have no children, barren wives frequently gave concubines to their husbands in order that they might own their children. Gen. 16: 1-3: 30: 1-8. When a child was weaned, which was at about the age of from two to three years, the mother made a public feast. Gen. 21: 8. The vehement craving for offspring implied by all these facts is still manifest in Eastern Countries, where the birth of a boy is so highly prized that frequently the father and mother are known by the name of the child, as Abu-Besharah or Em-Besharah, the "father of Besharah," or "mother of Besharah. Besides the strong sentiment of the times and the instinct of every true woman for motherhood, there was an additional incentive to maternity in the hope cherished by every Israelitish woman that she perchance might be the happy mother of the predicted Messiah.

The suffering then of Hannah, which followed the taunts of Peninnah, as a red mark follows the laying on of a scourge, was caused by the fact that, as a lash is made to cut into the flesh by having at its end little metallic strips, so these were made cruel with the assertion that God had forsaken her and that it was he that had "shut up her womb." Not only was her strong longing for children denied, but she was made to feel that that itself was an evidence that God had turned his back upon her.

THE SILENT PRAYER.—9-18. The reproaches of Peninnah only drove Hannah to the Lord. From him she could not be separated. Rising up, "after they had eaten in Shiloh" she repaired to the house of God and poured out her soul before him. No other such silent prayer is put on record—a prayer so agonizing and intense that it is hard to parallel unless we enter into the Garden of Gethsemane, and there listen

to one bearing upwards a burden of agony far greater than ever soul contained before—the concentrated woes and sorrows of all humanity. The prayer of the sinner when the Pharisee and he stood praying in the temple is a glimpse of a supplication something like Hannah's—but it is only a parable. So great was her anguish and so convulsive the unconscious moving of her lips that Eli, to whom the spectacle of a woman praying silently was unknown where oral prayer only was wont to be offered, supposed her to be drunken. Mark now the inimitable beauty and force of her conversation with Eli. 13-18.

Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial. "Belial" though translated as a person is really an adjective and signifies "worthlessness." The name as a synonym for Satan came into use only after Old Testament times. Paul used it with the latter signification in 2 Cor. 6: 15. It is well, also, to note the fact that in this appeal Jehovah for the first time is addressed as "Lord of Hosts"—an appellation that afterward became quite common.

The faith shown by Hannah in this prayer is not the least remarkable feature of it. Eli, convinced by the truth of her explanation, tells her to "go in peace." And she does go in peace. Her countenance is no more sad. Her burden is rolled away on him who desires to take away all our soul-burdens.

THE VOW.—In her prayer Hannah made a vow (11) which will readily be recognized as a pledge that the son for whom she asked should, if granted to her, be a Nazarite for life. Not merely a Nazarite as Samson was, who thought his Nazaritish obligations fullfilled so long as he wore his hair unshorn and abstained from the use of wine, but a Nazarite indeed, "holy unto the Lord all the days of his separation." Num. 6: 8. Vows were not uncommon in those days, and were, in the main, pledges of conduct or offerings based on the granting of petitions asked of God. Such was Jacob's famous vow at Bethel. Gen. 28: 20-22. Such too was the rash vow that resulted in the unutterably sad fate of Jephthath's daughter. Judg. 11: 30. Jonathan came near suffering a similar fate from the hasty vow pronounced by his father at Beth-aven. 1 Sam. 14: 24-45. The law concerning the vow is given in Lev. 27; Num. 30: 6-16. The Lord never said: "Thou shalt vow,"—but: "If a man vow, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth. On that IF are based the commands given in Eccl. 5: 4-6; Nah. 1: 15.

FAITH'S REWARD.—19–28. Bishop Hall says: "Good prayers never come creeping home—I am sure I shall receive what I ask or what I should ask." Hannah's believing prayer secured the coveted blessing. The name of the child perpetuates her gratitude to the Lord, for she calls it Samuel—"*asked of God.*" No doubt, as she nurses the babe, and his fingers play upon her bosom, that a fathomless mother-love wells up in her heart for this heaven-given child, and she shudders as she thinks of that irrevocable vow that will separate them forever, though she still holds firmly to her purpose. So she puts off going up to the yearly feast, where she would be most vividly reminded of her pledge, until after the child is weaned. This gave her a respite of two or three years at least. An old writer, Comestor, says that there was a three-fold weaning: first, from the mother's breast; second, at seven years of age, from the care of a nurse; and, third, at twelve, from childish ways. It is thought by some that Hannah may have kept the child until the second period mentioned, but it is improbable. A woman so conscientious as she would hardly have found an excuse for herself in staying away so long from the sanctuary. Three years, then, we may say, after that memorable petition, she appears again before Eli, the high priest. He has forgotten her, but not she him. How long kind words are remembered by grateful hearts after the speaker has forgotten them!

She comes dramatically, to the very spot whereon she stood when she asked for the boon. She recalls the circumstance to Eli, and says: "For this child I prayed;" and, withal, she comes joyfully. Three bullocks and an ephah of flour were thrice the usual offerings, and so expressed a triple joy. Probably one bullock was for a burnt offering, one for a sin offering, and the other for a peace offering. The first, it will be recollected, represented the entire dedication of one's self and property to the Lord, while the wine, the accompanying drink offering, represented the joy with which the sacrifice was made. Whatever may have been her trials before about giving him up, there is no suggestion of sorrow or of faint-heartedness in her act now. It is rather a jubilant triumph that in the next chapter bursts out into irrepressible song. But the mother-nature in her is not dead at this supreme moment of self-renunciation. Probably it was never so active, so vehement as now. And it is interesting to note that though she gave him to be the Lord's from this time forward, she still continued toward him her motherly ministrations, yearly reminding him of that relation between them, which, after all, was indissoluble, by yearly making for him "a little coat." 2:19. And, moreover, her maternal yearning was still farther gratified in the birth of three sons and two daughters (2:20, 21), and these, as *Henry* says, were "large interest" on her "loan." Neither should we lose that glimpse of the careful home training that she had given him during those three years, which is given us in the words: "And he worshiped the Lord there." If he worshiped the Lord in the sanctuary at so early an age, what lessons of divine love he must have had before that time at his mother's knee! And if he were so early brought to the Lord, what comfort of hope there is to all those who sincerely and wholly dedicate their children to him!

THE PRAYER-SONG.—2:1–10. The song in the second chapter is inseparably connected with the event we have been considering. It deserves to rank along with the songs of Miriam, of Deborah, of Mary, Moses, and David. It is generally true of the songs of those inspired poets, and particularly so of the song of Hannah, that though they may commence with reference to events local or personal, yet they soon leave them far beneath and soar into the heights of prophetic vision. All personal reference in this especial one seems to cease with the fifth verse, and, finally, reaches an altitude so exalted that the rapt soul of the singer sees the times and the face of Christ, The Anointed. 10. Such a vision David frequently saw. Ps. 2:6; 20:6; 21; 90:1, 2. And so to the character of Hannah as a devout woman, faithful in the keeping of her covenants, we have to add the gift of prophecy, and place her along by the side of the inspired seers of her times.

Side-light Truths.

1.—The religion which God has revealed to us is pre-eminently a *family* religion. Its highest idea is realized only when parents and children joyfully repair to the house of God together. Gen. 12:3; 18:19; 28:14; Deut. 6:7; 11:19; 31:12; Jer. 31:1; Luke 19:9; Acts 11:13, 14; 16:33.

2.—Children are "gifts from God"—to be accepted as from his hand and to be brought up in his fear. Honored is that one who in any way has the training of these little ones. Gen. 33:5; 1 Chr. 28:5; Ps. 127:3–5; 128:3, 4; Mark 10:14.

3.—Hannah was "no more sad." Faith and trust in God brings peace—peace unutterable. Is. 26:3; 48:18; John 14:17; Rom. 5:1; 14:17; 15:13; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:7; 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 Pet. 1:8.

4.—Hannah's prayer was a model on account of its importunate faith. See what the Scriptures commend as the elements of "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" that "availeth much." Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:8, 9, 18:1–7; 22:42; John 4:22–24; 1 Cor. 14:15; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:8; 5:5; Heb. 4:16; 10:22.

5.—Hannah's bargain, after all, turned out not to be a bad one. She gave away one child, but for that God gave her five more. Our sacrifices never are so great as his reward for them. 2 Chr. 25:9; Matt. 19:29; Mark 10:29, 30; Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; Phil. 3:8; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:13.

HYMN.

God, the eternal, mighty God,
To dearer names descends;
Calls you his treasure and his joy,
His children and his friends!

My Father, God! and may these lips
Pronounce a name so dear?
Not all the names of earth and heaven
Could so delight my ear.

BLACKBOARD.

LITTLE SAMUEL WAS
GOD'S CHILD.
"YE ARE OF GOD,
LITTLE CHILDREN."
1 John 4:4.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—A lady whose name was Hannah longed to have a child. Her home was very lonely to her because she had none. She lived in a country where men sometimes had more than one wife. Her husband had another wife whose name was Peninnah. Peninnah had children and was so evil minded that she was not content simply to be glad that God had given children to her, but jeered at Hannah because she had none. She ought to have pitied her, but she told her that God gave her no children because he was displeased with her. And she made Hannah feel very wretched—so wretched that she could not eat. And this, too, when they went up yearly to worship.

2.—But Hannah was a good woman. She went with her trouble into the temple unto the Lord, and prayed unto him. She did not pray aloud, but she prayed earnestly—so earnestly that the tears streamed down her face, and her lips kept twitching so that Eli, the high priest, thought she was drunken, and rebuked her for being so. But she was not at all—only very much distressed, and very earnest in her prayer. And what did she pray for? She prayed that God would give her a little baby boy. And she promised if he would do so that baby boy should be God's child all his life long, and as a sign that he belonged to him, his hair was always to remain uncut.

3.—God heard her prayer. The good priest Eli, when he found out that she was not drunken as he thought, but only praying earnestly, gave her his blessing also, and Hannah went back home feeling—oh, so peaceful and happy! Why? God had not spoken to her so any body could hear. But though he had not spoken out loud, he had spoken to Hannah in her heart, and told her that she should have what she asked for. Her trouble was all gone because she went to God with it. There is where we must always go with things that trouble us.

4.—God sent her the boy that she had prayed for. She called him Samuel, meaning "*asked of God*," and kept him three years, teaching him to love God and pray to him. Then she took him up to Shiloh, where God's house was, and gave him to Eli to be God's forever. And Samuel remained with Eli in the house of God. He was God's child. Hannah had promised that he should be, all his life. And what an honor it is to be God's child. Can you be his child? Your parents want you to be, we want you to be, God wants you to be his child.

HYMN.

What an honor 's granted me—
Weak and sinful and defiled—
All my sins are washed away;
And I'm received as God's own child.

BLACKBOARD.

LIKE SAMUEL
I WILL BE
GOD'S CHILD.

LESSON XXI.—MAY 23, 1875.—THE CHILD SAMUEL.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel **3**: **1-10.** Commit **1-10**; Primary Verse, **10.**

1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

4 That the Lord called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

6 And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him.

8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."—LUKE 18: 17.

TOPIC.—GOD REVEALED UNTO BABES.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Gen.**	**22: 1-18**	**The Child Isaac.**
T.	**Gen.**	**37: 3-11**	**The Child Joseph.**
W.	**Gen.**	**44: 1-34**	**The Child Benjamin.**
Th.	**1 Sam.**	**16: 1-13**	**The Child David.**
F.	**Dan.**	**1: 1-21**	**The Child Daniel.**
S.	**Luke**	**1: 57-80**	**The Child John.**
S.	**Luke**	**2: 40-52**	**The Child Jesus.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE CHILD'S MINISTRY.—When Samuel entered on his ministry he is supposed to have been about twelve years old. When he was left in the tabernacle what became of his father? 2: 11. Samuel's ministering is spoken of three times. See how they agree and how they differ. 2: 11; 2: 18; 3: 1. What did Samuel wear? 2: 18. What is an "ephod"? Ex. 28: 6-8. Who only were entitled to wear such a garment? Ex. 28: 4. What else did Samuel wear? 2: 19. How was he liked? 2: 26. Why was he liked? See Prov. 3: 3, 4, and Rom. 14: 18.

THE TWO APOSTATE PRIESTS.—What were the names of the two priests referred to? 1: 3. What were they called? 2: 12. What does that mean? They were like those persons mentioned in Titus 1: 16. What was their custom? 2: 13-16. What were they really entitled to? Lev. 7: 31-35. What was done with the fat? Lev. 3: 3-5. To whom did that belong Lev. 3: 16. Were the priests permitted to have raw flesh? Lev. 3: 17. What was the result of this greedy, irreverent spirit, as shown by the priests? 2: 17. What did Eli say to his sons? 2: 23-25.

THE WARNING.—Who gave it? 2: 27. What was the fault of Eli? 3: 13. How did the man of God speak of it? 2: 29. Read thoroughly 2: 30-36 to find out what was to happen to Eli and his house for his neglect in making his sons do right.

THE VISION.—See if you can tell the whole story that is told in the third chapter. When did it happen? 2, 3. The lamps were lit—when? When would they go out? When, then, did it happen? How many times was Samuel called? What mistake did he make? How many times did he make it? Why did he make it? 7. What did God tell him? 12-14. How did Samuel feel about it? 15. Did he tell Eli? 16. What did Eli say? What did that show about Eli's character? What was true afterward about Samuel? 19: 20. What took place in Shiloh? 21.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CHILD'S MINISTRY.—There is no large sheaf of facts to be gleaned concerning the ministry of the child Samuel. There is much to be inferred, but not much actually recorded. A glimpse of those years of child-service is given in the way with which it is made to contrast with the flagrant conduct of the two apostate priests, Hophni and Phinehas. In the first record that is made of Samuel in the tabernacle, (2: 11), it is said: "And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli, the priest," while in the next verse is this condemnation of Hophni and Phinehas: "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; *they* knew not the Lord." So, also, in the 17th verse of the same chapter, it is declared "that the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord;" "but *Samuel* (18) ministered before the Lord." And when the two priests were rebuked by Eli, and would not hearken unto the voice of their father (2: 25) it is afterward immediately told how "the child Samuel grew and was in favor both with the Lord and with men." It is more than probable that we owe the record that we have of his child-ministry to the fact that its devout faithfulness was in such contrast to the impious mocking of theirs.

We have another glimpse into his child-life in the fact that he was the preferred companion of Eli. His two erring, insolent sons seem to have deserted him altogether. It was Samuel who rendered unto him those filial attentions that he so much needed as his vision failed and the infirmities of age began to limit his powers. It was Samuel that slept close by him within ready call, and it was he that "ministered unto the Lord before Eli," in the place of those renegade sons who were engaged in unseemly wrangle over the shares they claimed in the sacrifices, utterly neglectful of the solemn sanctuary services within.

What Samuel's ministry was is matter of conjecture. The term is used with reference to the service of both priests and Levites to the Lord; to the part that the priests took in divine service; and to ministrations rendered by one man to another, such as Joshua to Moses and Elisha to Elijah. It may, therefore, mean any one or all of the three. Some have suggested that his work consisted in lighting the lamps, attending to the doors, cleaning the temple service, and in doing any such things as would naturally fall to the lot of a boy, not yet grown to the measure of more responsible duties. But the phrase: "ministered unto the Lord before Eli," coupled with the fact of the profligacy of Hophni and Phinehas and their manifest neglect of all that was devotional, makes it at least probable that Eli, partly from necessity and partly from inclination, employed Samuel to assist him even in his priestly ministrations.

HIS POSITION.—There appears to have been no hesitation on the part of Eli to admit this young child to a recognized position in his consecrated household. He is girded with a linen Ephod. 2: 18. Not such an one as was worn by Eli himself, as described in Ex. 28: 4–36, but one similar in shape and of coarser material, such perhaps, as was worn by ordinary priests, (1 Sam. 22: 18), and such as may have been worn by David when he "danced before the Lord with all his might" on the bringing of the ark into the City of David. 2 Sam. 6: 14. That which in the mind of Eli gave Samuel an unquestioned place in his household, no doubt, was that the story of his birth stamped him as the child of the Lord, rather than the child of Hannah. He felt bound to carry out her Nazaritish consecration of him because God's answer to that vow was, as it were, a mandate for its enforcement as binding on the priest as on the mother. The birth of the child was, in the first place, an evidence of the fact that he

was sent by God—the spirit of the child afterward became an indubitable proof of it. And that spirit brought him into favor both with the Lord and with men, 2:26,—almost the identical words spoken of Christ as a child. Luke, 2: 52. Neither child nor man can make any greater mistake than in supposing that he limits his influence by becoming a conscientiously faithful Christian. No one is so utterly uninfluential as the unprincipled reprobate. There must be some foundation of character upon which people can build their esteem, and in no one is it so broad as in those who have laid their foundations in Christ Jesus. On a character so based one feels he can securely rest; and saint and sinner both like to put their trust where it will not be misplaced.

THE APOSTATE PRIESTS.—It is said of Hophni and Phinehas that they were "sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." 2: 12. We have already explained in the preceding lesson that except in New Testament usage, Belial is not a person but an adjective, signifying worthless. They "knew not the Lord" in the sense of utterly disregarding him. Samuel "did not yet know the Lord" (3: 7) in the sense of having as yet had no direct communication with him. Hophni and Phinehas were among those that "profess they know, but in works they deny him" (Tit. 1: 16), and concerning whom Christ said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," and to whom he will say: "I never knew you—depart from me ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7: 21–23.

Their custom (2: 13–16) was when one offered a sacrifice, to send a servant, while the flesh was yet seething, "with a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand; and he struck it into the pan," etc., and all that it brought up the priests took for themselves. One can readily see how dextrous that servant might become in the use of his instrument. This was the first innovation. Growing bolder they came to demand the raw flesh for roasting.

To understand fully the lengths to which their brazen greed had led them, let us recall the fact that in case of the burnt offering the sacrifice was wholly consumed by fire; in case of the sin offering the fat was consumed upon the altar, while the remainder was burnt without the camp; and in case of the peace offering, part was consumed upon the altar, part was eaten by the priests, and part was eaten by the offerer himself. It was, therefore, only in relation to the peace offering that their unseemly extortion was manifested. What they were actually entitled to is exactly defined in Leviticus 7: 31–35. They were to have the right shoulder and the breast after it had been "waved" before the Lord. They were prohibited from eating fat and raw flesh. Lev. 3: 17. The fat was to be burned, for it was "the Lord's." Lev. 3: 3, 16. Their offense, then, was a high-handed infringement of the divine law. The result of their rapacity was that "men abhorred the offering of the Lord" for they saw that to the priests the offering was nothing except as it fed their gluttony. And not only this, but they shamelessly lay with the women whose duty in the outer court it probably was to make and repair the fabrics of the tabernacle. 2: 22.

THEIR REBUKE.—Eli heard "all the things that his sons did unto all Israel." It was his duty peremptorily to make them cease from their evil doings or to cause them to be signally punished. As a parent, it will be seen on consulting Gen. 38: 11, 24; Ex. 21: 15, 17, and Deut. 21: 18–21 that he had what would now be regarded as extraordinary authority. As high priest that authority was immeasurably increased. There was therefore no excuse in temporizing. But instead of dealing firmly as well as kindly with his sons, he administers a mild rebuke (2: 23–25), and leaves them then to act without any restraint. He tells them: "If a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?"—for though sins ignorantly or unintentionally committed could be atoned for, yet sins that were

willful and presumptuous could not be expiated. Such sins caused their author to be cut off from among his people. Num. 15: 29, 30.

THE WARNING.—2: 27–36. That came through "a man of God." We are not permitted to know who was this divinely sent messenger. It is not evident, as in the case of the one coming to Manoah and his wife (Judg. 13: 6–8), that he was a celestial visitor. The narration is more like that in Judges 6: 8. In this case, as in that, we are justified only in inferring that he was one of those "holy men of God," referred to in 2 Peter 1: 21, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The prophetic message delivered to Eli is of terrible import. It declares that "there shall not be an old man in thine house," that he should "see an enemy (a rival) in thy habitation;" that God would raise up a faithful priest "that shall do according to that which is in mine heart," and that the sign and seal of this prophecy was to be the death in one day of his two sons. One signal fulfillment of the first prediction is recorded in 1 Samuel 22: 18–22. The fulfillment of the second and third took place when Zadok was made priest instead of Abiathar. 1 K. 2: 26, 27. The death of the sons as foretold is recorded in 1 Samuel 4: 17, 18.

From 1 Chronicles 24: 3 it is ascertained that Eli was of the family of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son, because it is there affirmed that Ahimelech, the descendant of Eli, was of that branch of Aaron's house. It will be seen, therefore, that at some time, not chronicled, the high priesthood passed from the family of Eleazar, in which it would naturally have descended, to the family of Ithamar. The "enemy," or rival, therefore, referred to is one from the family of Eleazar and the prophecy is that the high priesthood should revert to the elder branch of the family. As Zadok came of that branch the prediction was specifically fulfilled.

The reason for the warning is given in the twenty-ninth verse of the second chapter. "*Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering.*" What Eli suffered to be done was the same as though he did it himself. "*And honorest thy sons above me.*" To be inactive when they were insulting the ordinances of God, to be subject to their evil desires, was to honor their wishes above the will of the Lord. But in a higher sense than this were they honored, for they obtained "the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel." What they left was all that the Lord received. No wonder then that God repented him of the promise made to the house of Eli that it should "walk before me forever," for a covenant broken by one of the parties thereto absolves the other. "Them that honor me will I honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

SAMUEL'S VISION,—3: 1–10, Came just before the early dawn—"ere the lamp of God went out." The fire upon the altar only was perpetual. Lev. 6: 12, 13. Visions came to men of God in dreams, in states of trance, or when awake, and, in the latter case, when in an exalted spiritual frame of mind. This happened to Samuel when he "did not yet know the Lord" by any such communication with him, and in such a natural way as to show that he was wholly unprepared for it. He was intent only on filial service to the one who was to him a spiritual father. He was all the more unprepared for it that it came in a time when such a thing was unusual—"there was no open vision"—no prophet oracle to be consulted by the people. "The word of the Lord was precious in those days," because by the mouth of a "man of God it was so rarely heard."

The narrative needs no explanation, and is vividly real. Samuel *ran* when he was called. He was zealous in his service. When he comes the second time he says: "Thou *didst* call me," and the aged Eli, touched by this proof of his devotion, dismisses him this time in a gentler way: "I called not, *my son;* lie down again." The third time he comes, and probably is more emphatic

in his assertion: "Thou *didst* call me." Then Eli perceives that the call is of the Lord, and Samuel learns — what we all ought to learn — that God may speak to us in the tones of a familiar friend. "And the Lord came, and stood, and called *as at other times.*" No difference in the call — but what a wonderful difference in the hearer. He "came and stood" — was visible as well as audible. No doubt Samuel was strongly affected. He was told by Eli to say: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," but in his agitation could only say: "Speak, for thy servant heareth." Then was childhood honored, for God passed by his accredited minister and revealed himself unto Samuel. So in Christ's day was it honored again when the Saviour took a child and set him in the midst of his disciples and said unto them: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

THE COMMUNICATION.—11–14. That was in substance a repetition of the warning. The warning might have been a warning only had it been heeded. Now it comes again, but this time it is the voice of doom. "The iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." Time for repentance does not always last.

THE REPETITION.—15–18. Samuel feared to repeat the matter to Eli. He dreaded to be the means of inflicting so terrible a blow on one whom he both loved and respected. So that morning he avoided his aged friend, making himself specially busy about opening the doors of the tabernacle. But Eli knows there must have been a revelation, and, from the boy's reticence about it, he infers that it must have in it evil for himself. He calls him, therefore, and adjures him to tell what it was. And Samuel being thus adjured, tells him "every whit." The affectingly submissive reply of Eli shows him to be a real child of God, whatever his sons may have become. As Bishop Hall says: "Every man can open his hand to God while he blesses; but to expose ourselves willingly to the afflicting hand of our Maker, and to kneel to him while he scourges, is peculiar only to the faithful." And the same authority says: "Whatever seemeth good to him can not but be good, however it seems to be." Eli's life, after all, was not a failure, for in those words of love and patient resignation, he taught a lesson to all coming ages.

SAMUEL'S GROWTH.—19–21. His growth was not physical merely: "The Lord was with him and did let none of his words fall to the ground." What he foretold came to pass. In that memorable night he had grown from being a mere boy to be a prophet. "And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." Says *Gilfillan:* "We mark from the time of this midnight revelation a change takes place in his aspect. With the innocence of childhood a graver, deeper shade is blended; smooth as his brow is still, it wears now a divine dignity, and his eye, in its frequent trances of mysterious absence and looks of preternatural meaning, shows that he has become Samuel the Seer." High honor for a mere lad—but had he not deserved it? How easy it would have been for him to have said: "It's no use trying to be faithful; Hophni and Phinehas, the very sons of Eli, are corrupt and wicked, and I—I'm nothing but a mere boy—I can't do anything." But so he did not say. His duties were small and insignificant at first, but in them he was devoutly faithful. By reason of that he was more and more trusted until finally God made choice of him, put his seal upon him and said to all Israel: "I will speak through his lips." That boy-prophet ought to stimulate many another boy to serve God with single-hearted devotion in small things.

Winnowed Truths.

1.—God does not depend on great men to carry out his purposes. He can

use a child as well as a man. Ps. 8: 2; Matt. 11: 25; 18: 3; 1 Cor. 1: 27, 28.

2.—He that is faithful over a few things shall be made ruler over many things. Matt. 25: 21; John 12: 26; Rom. 8: 17; 2 Pet. 1: 8; Rev. 3: 21.

3.—The more in favor we are with God the more in favor we will be with men. For then the spirit of God in us will attract men—the spirit of Him who said of himself: "And I if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me." Prov. 3: 3, 4; Is. 42: 1; John 12: 26; Rom. 14: 17, 18; 16: 17.

4.—*Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering?* God is jealous of his ordinances. He looks not at the number of our observances but at the spirit of them. Lev. 22: 19–21; 1 Sam. 15: 22; Ps. 4: 5; 51: 17–19; Is. 1: 13, 16, 17; Mal. 3: 3; Rom. 12: 1; 1 Pet. 2: 5.

5.—Esau and Eli—representatives of the class who find no place of repentance though they seek it carefully with tears. There may be for us a "Too late." Prov. 1: 28, 29; Is. 1: 15; Matt. 25: 1–13; Luke 13: 24, 25; John 8: 21; Rev. 16: 15; 22: 11; Luke 21: 34–36.

6.—A faith that lives only in sunshine is worthless. It is the dark days that test it and show whether or not it is good for anything. 2 K. 20: 16–19; Job. 1: 21; 2: 10: Ps. 39: 9; John 18: 11; Heb. 12: 9; Jas. 5: 10, 11; 1 Pet. 4: 19.

HYMN.

To-day the Saviour calls,
Ye wand'rers come;
O ye benighted souls,
Why longer roam.

To-day the Saviour calls,
Oh, hear him now;
Within these sacred walls
To Jesus bow.

BLACKBOARD.

God Calls. What shall be

YOUR ANSWER?

"Speak, Lord, THY SERVANT

HEARETH."

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The boy in the temple—ministering unto the Lord before Eli—clad in a little linen ephod (describe it)—trimming the lamps—opening the doors in the morning—waiting on Eli, the high priest, at night, cheerfully and promptly—perhaps helping in the ministrations at the altar.

2.—How much Eli needed him. Had grown old—eyes dim—his own two sons neglected him, and were wicked. What they did about the sacrifices—God said they should have right shoulder and breast—tried to get more (describe how)—were insolent and greedy, and made people "abhor" the sacrifices of God—Eli's rebuke to them, and how they disregarded it.

3.—God would not permit such things long to be done, so he sent a prophet to warn Eli—what the warning was—what Eli should have done. Parents must restrain their children sometimes.

4.—Warning of no effect—then God himself came to Samuel (tell the incidents of it and recall them from the children until you are sure they know them)—what he told Samuel—Samuel's fear to tell Eli—how Eli received it—Samuel's growth—became a prophet. What an honor for a boy! God has work for you also. When he calls what will you answer? This is what you ought to answer:

HYMN.

When the Lord doth call
Me some work to try,
I will answer him:
"Here, dear Lord, am I."

BLACKBOARD.

"HERE AM I."

LESSON XXII.—MAY 30, 1875.—THE DEATH OF ELI.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel 4 : 12-18. Commit 12-18; Primary Verse, 18.

12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.
13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the way side watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. When the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out.
14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, what meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily and told Eli.
15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.
16 And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?
17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.
18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."—PROV. 19: 18.

TOPIC.—THE CERTAINTY OF JUDGMENT.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Num.**	**20 : 1-29**	**The Death of Aaron.**
T.	**Deut.**	**34 : 1- 8**	**The Death of Moses.**
W.	**Num.**	**16 : 16-35**	**The Death of Korah.**
Th.	**1 Sam.**	**6 : 12-21**	**Death of the men of Bethshemesh.**
F.	**2 Sam.**	**18 : 1-33**	**Death of a Disobedient Son.**
S.	**Ps.**	**78 : 40-72**	**A Record of Ingratitude.**
S.	**Lam.**	**2 : 1- 7**	**A Rejected Tabernacle.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE DEFEAT.—What was Israel now engaged in? 1. Where did they encamp? Read 1 Sam. 7: 12 and see when it was first named and the meaning of the name. If it was first named Ebenezer then, how is it that it is so called in this chapter? What was the result of the battle? 2.

THE PROPOSED REMEDY.—What question did the elders of Israel ask after the battle? 3. Who did they think it was that smote them? How did they propose to get the Lord to fight on their side? Whom did they bring with the ark? 4. Did they have the most faith in the ark or in the Lord? Which did they say would save them? 3. Were they right? Instead of sending for the ark what ought they to have done? What made them think it would save them? Read Num. 10: 35; Josh. 3: 10-17; 7: 4, 5 and see if you can tell.

ITS EFFECT.—What effect did the ark have when it was brought into camp? 5. What effect did it have on the Philistines? 6, 7. Why were they afraid? 7, 8. Which, then, do you think they had the most faith in—the Lord, or their god, Dagon? What did they say to each other? 9.

THE BATTLE.—How did the battle go now that the Israelites had the ark? 10. How many fell? What else happened? 11. Of what prophecy was this a fulfillment? 2: 32, 34. See, also, if Deut. 28: 25 has anything to do with it. When and why were such things to happen? Deut. 28: 15.

ELI TOLD.—Where was Eli? 13. In what city? Why was he watching? How old was he? 15. Who was it that came running with the news? 12. What had he done to himself? Why? Whom did he tell before Eli? 13. How did Eli know there was anything the matter? 14. If his eyes had not been dim could he have seen anything that would have prepared him for bad tidings? What? How did Eli speak to the messenger? 16. What did the messenger tell him? 17. Heavy news for an old man, was it not? What was it that broke his heart? 18. How long had he judged Israel? Why was it that this judgment came upon him? 3: 11-14. Would it not have been a real kindness to them if Eli had restrained his sons? Was it not the worst thing he could do for them to let them have their own way?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE SITUATION.—In the last three lessons we have had no hint of war. The glimpse of harvest fields, the absorbing interest of an unobtrusive, unselfish life, the longer look into the tabernacle where we beheld a woman praying with strong faith, saw her prayer answered and her boy grow up in accordance with the spirit as well as the letter of her vow until he became a recognized prophet—all these have for the time completely shut out the strife that has all the while been going on. The fact that, in the midst of war there can be such glimpses of a peace utterly undisturbed by the passions of men surging so violently and so near is illustrative of the oft-felt experience that has come to Christians when their outward lives were troubled, but within was peace, deep and singularly sweet—a peace that in view of their trials "passeth understanding." Mrs. Stowe has in the following stanzas beautifully expressed the same thought:

When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And billows wild contend with angry roar,
'Tis said, far down, beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

So, far away, the roar of passion, dieth
And loving thoughts rise calm and peacefully,
And no rude storm however fierce it flieth,
Disturbs the soul that dwells, O Lord, in thee.

Samson began to deliver Israel, and the struggle for independence which commenced with his single-handed exploits finally included in it the whole of Israel. Their servitude to the Philistines lasted forty years. It began before the birth of Samson (Judg. 13: 5), and terminated in about the twenty-eth year of Samuel's judgeship. 7: 2, 13, 14. As Samson judged Israel twenty years during the latter part of his life, it would seem at least to be conclusive that the latter part of his judgeship was contemporaneous with that of Eli, and with the early life of Samuel. Samson's last mighty act, we can infer, not only destroyed the power of Dagon over the Israelites, but broke the shackles of their servitude as well.

THE DEFEAT.—12. It would appear from the first verse that Israel was summoned to battle by Samuel. But the first sentence has its present place by reason of the very un-inspired division of the Bible into chapters and verses. It really belongs to, and is explanatory of the last verse of the third chapter. How the Israelites came to join battle, or who the leader was is not told. The place of the battle was at Ebenezer, *The Stone of Help*. Ebenezer did not obtain its name until afterward, and as related in chapter 7: 12. We already have had examples showing that it was no unusual thing for a writer in mentioning places to call them by the names by which they were known in his day, rather than their former names. Compare Joshua 4: 19 with Joshua 5: 9, and Num. 14: 45 with 21: 3. The location of the spot is not exactly ascertainable. From the supposed identity of "Aphek," where the Philistines pitched, with the "Aphekah" mentioned as being among the cities of Judah, it is argued that it must have been on the frontier of the western part of Judah. The basis of this argument may be seen by referring to Joshua 15: 21, 48, 53. But we get a surer clue to its position from 1 Samuel 7: 12, where it is said to be "between Mizpeh and Shen." Mizpeh, or Mizpah in the tribe of Benjamin, the history of which is traced until it is found to coincide with *Scopus*, "the broad ridge which forms the continuation of the Mount of Olives to the north and east, and from which the traveler gains, like Titus, his first view, and takes his last farewell of the domes, walls, and towers of the holy city." This location answers to the condition that it must be within one day's reach of Shiloh. 12. In the battle at this place the Israelites were beaten with the loss of four thousand men. 2.

THE PROPOSED REMEDY.—3. The elders attributed their defeat not to the enemy but to the Lord. They then

propose to bring the ark into camp, reasoning that if that be with them God will smite them no longer, and, after a manner will be compelled, in the defense of his own glory, to smite their enemies. They were induced the more to believe this by the historic triumphs of the ark. Before it the waters of Jordan were separated, and the walls of Jericho fell after they were compassed by it for seven days. It was a generation more remarkable for its superstition than its faith. It was a generation that was just coming back to the worship of Jehovah so that it is not remarkable that it placed so much reliance on the virtues of a shrine of such sacred memories, and in connection with which such wonderful things had transpired. Had they been better instructed, they would have known that they were straitened in themselves and not in the Lord, and that such an humbling of themselves before him as was done by Joshua and the elders of Israel after the defeat before Ai would have shown them the cause and the remedy for their failure. With a better faith than theirs, David when he was obliged to flea before Absalom, from Jerusalem, would not permit the priests to remove the ark saying: "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation. But if he say: I have no delight in thee; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." 2 Sam. 15: 13–26.

Its Effect.—4–8. The ark had remained undisturbed in Shiloh for about 345 years. Now, in fulfillment of the prophecy against Eli, but at the superstitious behest of a host demoralized by an insignificant reverse, it was taken away never to return. It was sent for by the people. Mob rule was in the ascendant. They waited for no divine command or permission given through priestly lips. "In those days every man did that which was right in his own eyes." They treated their God and the ark of his covenant with profane familiarity, as if he and it were subject to their will. Hophni and Phinehas, who should have been the resolute, uncompromising guardians of his honor and of it, hesitated not to obey their sacrilegious mandate. Such impious demeanor demanded a signal rebuke, and, besides, the people needed to be taught not to put their trust in outward symbols instead of in Jehovah himself. "All Israel shouted with a great shout" when the ark came into camp—but it was a shout of welcome to a coming doom instead of a coming salvation. The Philistines heard the sound, and when they understood the reason of it they trembled and were afraid. Their truth-telling fear gives us the comparative estimate which they were wont in their secret hearts to put on the God of the Israelites. "Woe unto us!" they cry, "who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness." They well represent that class of people that even now sneer at the existence and power and wrath of the Lord as shown in the Bible, but who, in the presence of some approaching awful calamity that threatens to whelm them to destruction, stand unnerved and terror-stricken, showing their real belief in God by their abject fear of him. We may rest assured that deep within the soul of man is implanted a belief in GOD, and implanted too firmly ever to be rooted out. In the fright of the Philistines we have an indubitable proof that in the nations round about there was a faith in God superior to what they entertained for their own gods, and constrained by the facts to which the Philistines refer in their fear-compelled confession.

The Battle.—9–11. But the Philistines, though dismayed, in a measure recover from their panic. But the issue has become with them a very grave one. It is no longer merely victory or defeat, but—such is their fear of Jehovah—it must be for them either victory or subjugation. They have swung from the courage of hope to the courage of

despair. They exhort each other to quit themselves like men—almost in the same words used by soldier Paul in his exhortation to his fellow Christians at Corinth. 1 Cor. 16:13. But in how much nobler a cause was Paul's ringing command! And how much more encouragement is there for Christians than for any one else to "quit themselves like men"! For in our case defeat is impossible, and our victory and our reward are certain.

> Strong in the Lord of Hosts
> And in his mighty power,
> Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
> Is more than conqueror.

The battle is joined; Israel is smitten; thirty thousand footmen perish; the ark of God is taken, and Hophni and Phinehas, its two unworthy priests, are slain. What a fateful bulletin to communicate to the aged priest watching yonder in Shiloh! Another part of the prophecy is fulfilled, for Hophni and Phinehas have perished in one day. 2:34. In this defeat also is fulfilled those larger prophecies in Lev. 26:17, and Deut. 28:25. Though seeming to allow dishonor to come upon his name, yet in reality God has vindicated it by showing his people how idle it is to put trust in anything but himself. Let us learn that he cares for ceremonial observances, though rigidly kept, for formal prayers, for church attendance, or for any outward service as little as he cared for the homage paid to the ark. Our hearts must be set, not on them, but on him. He it is that wants our heart-obedience. As is said by the *Burleburger Bible:* "If we only preach about Him, teach, hear, talk, discuss, and dispute about Him; take his name into our mouth, but will not let him work or show his power in us, he will no more help us than the ark helped the Israelites."

THE RUNNER.—Men swift of foot were important personages in the days of the primitive nations. It was a high compliment to be so called. Races were instituted to encourage the natural rivalry that exists among men to excel in speed. It is to these that Paul refers when he says: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:1; see also 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:14; 2 Tim. 4:7. The running of Cushi and Ahimaaz is told in 2 Sam. 18:19–31. Footmen ran before the chariots of august personages. 8:11; 2 Sam. 15:1; 1 K. 1:5; Jer. 12:5. It is thought by some Jews that the present runner was no less a person than Saul. He ran with clothes rent and earth upon his head—tokens of a great calamity and of his affliction over it. Josh. 7:6; 2 Sam. 1:2; Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 27:30,31; Job. 2:12.

THE COMMENCEMENT.—5–18. The news was first told to the city instead of to the man whose heart was trembling for the ark of God. It would appear that Eli had, with his usual weakness, allowed the ark to be taken away against his better judgment. Now he sits by the wayside watching, fearing lest some calamity has happened to it. "The wayside" by which he sat was the one passing through the gate leading into the inner court of the tabernacle. Here, by the side of the gate (18), and facing the way, he sat on a sort of a rude throne without a back, in front of which the people must pass in going up to worship. Here he would be likely to catch the first intelligence of the distant battle. The first hint of the coming calamitous news is the loud outcry of the grief-stricken city. Then comes in the woeful messenger. Eli's dim eyes can not see in his aspect the fate that has befallen Israel, or he would have had no need to enquire what had there been done. His gracious address to the runner—the words of welcome that sound like a benediction—show how little he is prepared to receive the tidings that await him. The messenger, bursting as he is with the greatness of the disaster, can not repress his speech and

speak with careful caution, fearful of the full effect of such news, but showers down the particulars like blows upon the defenceless head of the aged priest. He bears up under the tidings that Israel has fled with great slaughter; and even when he is told that his two sons are slain; but "It came to pass when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward, by the side of the gate; and his neck brake, and he died, for he was an old man and very heavy." His heart was broken, before his fall, by the knowledge that the ark was in the hands of the Philistines. His death proved that his heart at least was faithful to the fortunes of his divine Master though he had been culpably weak in the preservation of his honor.

ELI'S ERROR.—In the story as told in the Scriptures, it is easy enough to see the magnitude of the mistake that Eli committed. It is not so easy, however, for other fond parents to see that in indulging their children instead of putting a proper restraint upon them they are enacting the same folly, and are preparing for themselves and their children a similar judgment. The fact is that there is nothing in the end so cruel as the thoughtless, ill-judged humoring of children. And every child is the better, and feels the better, for knowing that there are good wholesome restraints around him—restraints put there for his own good and out of love to him. He who is not curbed in his boyhood will not know how to curb himself when grown. The undisciplined youth makes an undisciplined, self-destructive man. As one text has it: "chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying," and as is further said in Proverbs 29: 17: "correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." How to wisely restrain the child and still keep summer in his heart is the problem that every thoughtful, earnest parent is anxiously studying. The lesson gives to teachers an admirable chance to show to children that in checking and correcting, parents are really doing them the gre..est kindness that lies in their power.

Side-light Truths.

1.—God promises and God gives an inward peace that "passeth understanding," such as the world can not give neither can it take away. Is. 26: 3; Luke 1: 78, 79; John 14: 17; 16: 33: Rom. 8: 6; Gal. 5: 22; Phil. 4: 7.

2.—We must trust in no ark, in no ceremonials strictly observed, in no good works of our own—in nothing but the Lord himself. 1 Sam. 15: 22; Ps. 51: 6; Hos. 6: 6; Micah 6: 6–8; Matt. 9: 13; Mark 12: 33; Heb. 4: 12, 13.

3.—Infidelity comes more from the heart than the head. He who finds it impossible to believe in God has more occasion to examine his heart than his logic. Ps. 14: 1; 10: 4; 53: 1; Is. 26: 10, 11; John 3: 3; Acts 17: 18; Rom. 8: 6, 7; 1 Cor. 2: 14; 2 Cor. 4: 3–6.

4.—If God seems for a time to desert his people, it is that they may come the more truly to rely upon him, and to be the better fitted for victories all the more glorious. If he tries them it is to purify them. Ps. 50: 15; 91: 15; Is. 48: 10; Dan. 11: 35; 12: 10; Zech. 13: 9; 1 Pet. 1: 5–9; 4: 12, 13.

5.—Weak indulgence to children is the worst of cruelty. Prov. 13: 24; 18: 19; 22: 15; 23: 13, 14; 29: 15, 17; Eph. 6: 4.

6.—As a man proves that a child is his son by correcting him, so does God show to us that we are really his children when he lays his chastening rod upon us. Deut. 8: 5; 2 Sam. 7: 14; Prov. 3: 12; Heb. 12: 6–10; Rev. 3: 19.

HYMN.

Thy will be done! I will not fear,
The fate provided by thy love;
Though clouds and darkness shroud me here,
I know that all is bright above.

The stars of heaven are shining on,
Though the frail eyes are dimmed with tears,
The hopes of earth indeed are gone,
But ours are the immortal years.

BLACKBOARD.

IT IS BETTER TO BE

RESTRAINED NOW

THAN

DESTROYED HEREAFTER.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—What can the little ones tell about Samson? What great things did he do? What was the last thing he did? He was "to begin" to deliver Israel from the Philistines and this was the way that their deliverance commenced. Afterward they began to fight for themselves. They were doing this all the time that Samuel, whom we have been learning about, was growing up. After he had grown to be a pretty big boy and become a prophet, the Israelites went up to fight with the Philistines in a place which was afterwards called *Ebenezer*—that means "the stone of help." But the Israelites did not ask God to help them that day, and so they were beaten, and lost four thousand men. If any boy or girl at night finds that he or she is beaten—that Satan has overcome them—they will find that it is because they did not ask God real earnestly in the morning to help them all day.

2.—Now what do you think the Israelites did when they found they were beaten? What do you think they ought to have done? They ought to have turned to God and asked him to help them. But they did not. They turned to the *ark of the Lord*. What was the ark made of? Could *that* help them any?

3.—The history—ark brought into camp—shouting of the Israelites (falsely trusting in the ark)—the fear of the Philistines (falsely fearing the ark)—the exhortation of the Philistines to each other—the battle—the defeat—30,000 Israelites killed—the ark taken—Hophni and Phinehas slain.

4.—Eli waiting by the gate—his rude throne—grown old—could not see—the runner—the city told of the defeat—their outcry—Eli hears it—the runner tells him—his death—its reason—reason of the judgment upon him and his sons.

HYMN.

Our life how pleasant 'twould be,
So happy and bright alway,
No cares in our hearts would come,
Did we ever the Saviour obey.

BLACKBOARD.

TO OBEY

IS BETTER THAN

TO BE CHASTISED.

Editorial Miscellany

Those who are wont to turn over to this department of the Magazine for relishing tid-bits will be disappointed this issue. The five exceedingly long lessons of this month have crowded out two of our departments, although the publishers have given us eight extra pages! Any other part of The Teacher we feel will bear compression and elision except the lesson department. That, under any circumstances, must respond to the requirements of the occasion. Our editorial modesty, therefore, leads us to retire into cramped space rather than that our readers should miss such helpful and readable articles as have been contributed by Chanceller Howard Crosby, Rev. Lyman Abbott and Dr. Edward Beecher. Our board, we contend, is spread as bountifully as ever—but the appetizing dishes are all at the other end of the table!

We are called upon by Mr. R. W. Wright to surrender our belief in Samson's rending of a lion. Mr. Wright wrote an article for *Scribner* in July 1871, with a view to compelling the world to accept a new interpretation of the story. Stripped of their diacritical signs, vowel-points, and *matres lectiones*, he says that the words translated "young lion" or, lion cub, also mean a "lion-cup." This latter term was applied to the wine press, which was shaped somewhat like a cup and was cut out of solid rock. It consisted of two blocks of stone, one of which was ten feet broad and three feet thick, with a receptacle for grapes hollowed out in it eight feet square and fifteen inches deep. This was placed upon another block about five feet square, in which was a wine receptacle about four feet square and three feet deep.

To such a "lion-cup" Samson would be violently hostile on account of his Nazaritish vow. It is this, Mr. Wright says, that "roared" against Samson in the vineyards of Timnath; for, he cites, "strong drink is raging" and this lion-cup would strongly challenge him to an encounter. Taking this solution of the story, all else in it he thinks, becomes exceedingly probable. As, for instance, that Samson should afterward find a swarm of bees and honey in the broken press. He argues that it would be the most natural thing in the world for bees to settle in the saccharine wine-receptacle and one of the most unnatural things to hive themselves in the skeleton of a dead lion. The riddle, too, in his estimation is the more ingenious, and so far as it was merely an exhibition of strength, to destroy the solid wine-press was a far more Herculean feat than to rend a lion.

Samson says: "I will twist you a twister," and, says Mr. Wright: "he certainly did; for he succeeded in not only puzzling his attendants, but in propounding a riddle which *it has taken the world three thousand years to guess.*" We are conscious of not being able in so short a resume to do full justice to Mr. Wright's ingenious and somewhat plausible theory, but, after all, it does not seem to us that it was left to him to find out the true solution of the riddle. Samson himself said to the Philistines: "If ye had not plowed with my heifer, *ye had not found out my riddle.*" Now the question is: Does Mr. Wright think that Samson understood his own riddle?

In his address before the New York S. S. Association, Henry Varley gave a touching account of the conversion of one of his own children, five of whom are rejoicing in the Saviour. His eldest boy when about six years of age told a lie. Taking him into his study, he kindly spoke to him and asked him: "Why did you tell a lie?" "I don't

really know," was the answer. "Do you think I beat that boy?" said Mr. Varley to his audience. "No, I saw a reproduction of the past of my own life. I remembered that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. 'Dear Harry' said I, 'listen to me;'" and then Mr. Varley showed to him how sinful the heart is and its need of God. The boy wept and the father knelt and prayed: "My Father, thou canst give a new heart. I long to have my child born again;" and, says Mr. Varley: "I led my child to Christ then and there." How simply and easily it was done! How much better than the rod was this frank affectionate, Christian talk with his boy. Punishment might possibly indeed have restrained the inclination to lie, but this wiser course took away the inclination altogether. By the one course he might perhaps have cured the fault—by this he cured the heart.

IN the conclusion of his address Mr. Varley made this fervent appeal:

Don't let the child grow up to sow his wild oats, and reap years of sorrow and regret. Why not lead him at once to Christ? Is yours a fabled Christ? Is the gospel a cheat? O sirs, I charge you, teach your children their absolute need of Christ to make them fit to live. Taking Christ as a gift, life is beautiful. The life of the child is fostered by the Spirit of God, and the Christ-life in him will become stronger and stronger, and as he grows to be like his Lord, you will rejoice. Instead of being selfish and unkind, he will grow generous, noble, true, Christlike; when, if left to himself, no power will prevent his inclination to evil.

IT is wonderful how strong and lasting is the incredulity that children can become intelligent converts and true disciples of Christ. The sentiment of the larger part of almost any community is still against the fact. It is admitted to be a possible, but is held to be an improbable thing; whereas it is much more probable than that adults should be converted. Those who hold strongly to the theory that children can be born of God are, many of them, infidels in practice. It is only those whose eyes, time and again, have witnessed this divine second-birth that have a joyful, firm faith in it. Having said this much, we desire to present a little more upon the same subject from Dr. Bushnell:

There is a secret assumption that true knowledge of God, as in friendship, is possible to adults, but not to children; whereas, the real fact is, that children are a great deal more capable of it. The boy child Samuel could hear the call when old Eli could not. Children may not think the gospel experiences as well, but they can have them a great deal more easily. Tell the child how present God is, how loving he is, how close by he is in all good thoughts, and he will take the sense a great deal better than the adult soul, that has gone a doubting so far, and speculated his mind half away in the false intellectualities miscalled reason. Ah, my friends, "of these, of such is the kingdom of heaven:" so Christ says, and we make almost nothing of it. These children can make room for more gospel than we, and take in all most precious thoughts of God more easily. The very highest and most spiritual things are a great deal closer to them than us. Let us not wonder and not be offended if they break out in hozannas on just looking into the face of Jesus, when the great multitude of priests and apostles are dumb along the road as the ass on which he rides.

FROM the same source have come many good things, one more of which we desire to reproduce here. It is in relation to the qualifications of teachers for their duties. And certainly we have read nothing on that subject more impressive nor having more of the very spirit of the gospel in it than this which we quote from him:

No man teaches a gospel, whether in his pulpit, or at his table, or in his school, who does not know Jesus; and he can not know Jesus out of any book by simply knowing the book, whether it be the Bible or anything else; but he must know the being, the very person; indeed, he must become Jesus in a very important sense himself. It will not be enough to go through some gusty phase of experience, some inward commotion, some turbulent heat, some vision of a flighty brain. You will fitly represent Jesus only when you are much with him, getting into his thoughts, and being carefully practiced in them. You must be new-charactered in him, and that requires a great deal; a large meditation of the combined qualities that make up his beauty, and get the equilibrium of his dignity—his gentleness, unfearingness, impartiality, unsparing truth, deference to the humble, the burden

of his sorrow, the love he seals by his death. If you had the whole four gospels at your tongue's end, if you understood all the occasions, times, conjunctions, harmonies, and had everything elaborated in the most scientific terms of argument, that would not qualify you. Simply to see Jesus in you, hear him in your voice, trace him in your patiences and charities, behold his gentleness in your walk, breathe his love in the flavors of your pure concern of godless men — this would signify more, preach more gospel, I might almost say, without a word beside. Your people, your house, your class, your school, living in such an atmosphere, will all have Christly power upon them.

Sunday School Work.

Just now is a busy time among Sunday-school workers. The notes of preparation for the coming State Conventions are heard all over the land. California, which always seems to have a good time, sends forth its summons to meet at Sacramento, May 18-20. Georgia has its first annual convention at Union Point, midway between Augusta and Atlanta. Its president, W. G. Whidby, extends a most cordial invitation to northern Sunday-school people to come down and help set the machine to going. Indiana assembles at LaFayette, June 1-3. Kansas at Fort Scott, (after grasshopper days,) October 26-28. Maine at Auburn, May 18-20. Missouri at St. Louis, May 25-27. Nebraska at Lincoln, Aug. 17-19. New Jersey at Somerville, November 9-11. New York at Syracuse, June 8-10. Ohio at Newark, June 8-10. Pennsylvania at Lebanon, June 8-10. Wisconsin at Whitewater, May 11-13. No teacher can afford to miss going to his State Convention, even if he has to pinch himself on necessities to get the means to attend.——Right here, also, ought to be chronicled the fact that the Chautauqua assembly is put down for August 3-17. No system of mnemonics will be needed to keep *that* in mind, we know. Among the celebrities already announced for that occasion is Rev. Joseph Parker, D. D., of London. We are afraid that Vincent means to make even the International Convention seem dwarfish by the side of his colossal two weeks' university! By the way, is it to be bigger than it was last year? ——New England branches out after the Chatauqua pattern on Lake Winnipesaukee, in New Hampshire. New York, they say, is going to try the experiment at Cazenovia, and Ohio at Canton. Pretty soon no one will need to go farther than the first lake in order to enjoy a Sunday-school camp-meeting.——By the will of the late Ex-Chief Justice of Rhode Island, Richard Ward Greene, the M. E. Sunday-schools of that state are to receive $75,000; one-third now, and the remainder upon the death of his wife. Perhaps if there were more bequests to aid in rightly training children, there would be less occasion for costly asylums for the reclamation of adults.——Texas has been heard from. We were sure that it would be when Reynolds and Paxson started down there. They had a rousingly enthusiastic convention at Dallas. So will they have at other places. And when those Texans do get roused they don't lose their enthusiasm in a hurry.——Rev. John O. Foster, of St. Charles, Ill., on the occasion of the annual Sabbath-school election had an installation service which included all the teachers as well as the re-elected officers. He prefaced the ceremony by saying that one class the past year had had eighteen different teachers, and that thing had got to be stopped! The covenant of better service into which they all heartily entered was both solemn and impressive.——B. F. Jacobs has done a great deal of good work as a lay preacher. The *Alliance* hints that if he can find "a sweet singer" to accompany him, he will go out on a mission similar to that of Moody and Sankey, Whittle and Bliss. He already has received numerous calls. As one good brother in the noon meeting said: "Harness up and go, Brother Jacobs."——"Mother Byckerdyke" of army hospital fame, tells us that she wants some libraries for grasshoppered Kansas Sunday-schools. There are thousands of her "boys" who had rather go without coats than that she should ask in vain. Let's hear from some of them.——Every Sunday-school man has heard of "Tom Morrison," of St. Louis, and of his great Sabbath-school in that city. After a faithful service of twenty-five years he resigns the superintendency to make way for Gen. Anson E. More. The change, we understand, is occasioned by the fact that the school had to be under the control of some church which would see that it was properly supported. Dr. Niccolls' church assumes the burden. But it will be odd to hear Biddle Market Sabbath-school called by its real title, or by any other name than "Tom Morrison's School."——Park Street Church, Boston, is an example to many others. It makes an annual appropriation for the Sunday-school on the estimate of the supcrintendent. No one can keep house with any system or comfort who does not know when he is to have any money or how much it will be when he gets it. When it comes in driblets, though the aggregate amount may be comfortable enough, he does not know whether to buy a rolling-pin, a flat iron, or a dozen of buttons. Just such ludicrous hesitations occur to a superintendent who is remitted to uncertain Sunday-school collections for the means to carry on his school.——The American Sunday School Union hasn't yet gotten out of its semi-centennial. The last meeting was in Hartford. ——Rev. Dr. Haskins, of Williamsburg, L. I., conducts an afternoon service "specially adapted to the wants and understanding of the children." ——On invitation of the faculty, J. Bennet Tyler lectured before the theologues of Princeton on March 23, on Sabbath-school matters. The students liked the lecture so well that they invited

him to address them again. Prior engagements hindered him from accepting this second invitation — but there are rumors about next year. Now let other theological seminaries take the hint. None of them need fear to follow where Princeton leads the way.——In February the Sunday-school of the Market Square Church, of Harrisburg, Pa., celebrated its fifty-ninth anniversary. Mr. James W. Weir has been its superintendent for the unbroken term of forty-one years. And the school mean to have him celebrate the fiftieth year if he shall live so long.——Dr. John L. Bush, of Spencer, Mass., offers to give a watch to the boys of his Sabbath-school, who now are between fourteen and nineteen years of age, when they come to be twenty-one, who can honestly aver that they have not meantime sworn, used tobacco, or drank any liquor. That offer will nip in many of them habits which already have come to bud.

LITERATURE.

We count among the really valuable helps to Scripture study and general religious information Rev. Lyman Abbott's *Dictionary of Religious Knowledge*, issued by the Harpers. It is a Bible dictionary, a theological dictionary, a dictionary of ecclesiastical history, and a dictionary of ecclesiastical terms, all combined. This volume is the work of several years of labor, the preparation for it dating as far back as 1860, and shows all through the marks of care and deliberation. Mr. Abbott is a painstaking student and a conscientious writer. His articles are as full as one can desire, and yet are so concise that no space is thrown away. They are expressed, too, in remarkably pure, good English, and are written for popular as well as professional use. The book has a thousand pages of a size a little larger than those of THE TEACHER, and is profusely illustrated with explanatory cuts. Whoever gets it will find it invaluable for reference.

A BOOK over which one is inclined to linger long is *Christ in Art*, by Edward Eggleston, published by J. B. Ford & Co. The main feature of the work is the illustrations by Alexander Bida of incidents in the life of Christ. These are engravings reproduced by the xylographic process from the designs of a work published by Messrs. Hachette & Co., of Paris. Twelve years were devoted to the preparation of the original drawings and engravings, and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were spent in their production. One hundred and sixty-five dollars is the subscription price of the French work. The American reproduction does not give all of the original illustrations, but enough to give a complete pictorial representation of the life of the Saviour. Numerous smaller engravings by American artists of tools, coins, etc., help to elucidate the Scripture text.

Bida is a Christian Jew. In exact portrayal he is far the superior of Dore, his competitor in Scripture illustration. Dore is sensationally dramatic; Bida is simple and natural. Dore is imaginative; Bida is truthfully real. Dore's conceptions are often weird and unreal; Bida never passes beyond the bounds of possibility. And yet Bida's characters are impressive. His Scribes and Pharisees are, as the Scriptures have painted them, keen, shrewd, grasping, and unscrupulous. Their faces show them to be money-loving, opinionated, and argumentative — thoroughly delighted in the subtleties of their law. And Judas — all the accumulated detestation of eighteen hundred years must be more than satisfied with the representation that is given him in his bargaining interview with the Sanhedrim! Such a disgusting, treacherous face, so full of greed and expressive of low cunning, would be out of place on any one except on him who betrayed his Master. In the faces that we have seen of Christ we have always been disappointed. Probably we never shall look upon any earthly conception of him and be satisfied. And yet Bida's Christ is so full of sweetness and dignity, so refined above the crowd, possessing such a serenity and peace and such a divine compassion, so expressive of being "in the world and yet not of it" that it goes far toward meeting that undefined ideal of what it should be. With the art part of the volume we do not see how any one can help being delighted.

Dr. Eggleston will have to wait for appreciation for his share of the work until each one has satiated himself in looking at the illustrations. But what he has done deserves, at the last at least, a full recognition. He has arranged from the four gospels a connected account of the life of Christ in the exact words of the Scripture. It has the continuity and effect of a narrative, and, taken together with the illustrations, will help to make "the old, old story" more impressive and real.

Potter's Complete Bible Encyclopedia has reached No. XLII. in its serial issue, and has nearly completed those topics coming under the letter W. The end, therefore, does not seem far away. We see no diminution as it approaches completion of the pains taken either by the editor or by the publishers. We notice that it was awarded a premium at the Franklin Institute for "intrinsic value of contents, beauty and excellence of paper, printing, and engravings." It was a premium well deserved. Philadelphia: John E. Potter & Co.

The American Educational Cyclopedia (annual — Vol. I.) comprises a history of past and present school systems, school legislation, etc.—in fact is a storehouse of information on all educational matters. New York: J. W. Schermerhorn & Co.

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FROM A COMMONWEALTH TO A KINGDOM.

BY REV. LEONARD BACON, D. D.

IN order to understand fairly what the revolution was which took place in Israel when the nation demanded a king, we must recollect what the theocracy over the chosen people had been, and how far it was superceded by the monarchy.*

What is the meaning of the word "theocracy"? Other words, compounded in the same way, are in common use. In a democracy, the *demos*, or people, is the supreme power; the laws are recognized as proceeding from the people; magistrates and officers are the servants of the people. In an aristocracy, the *aristos*, or nobles, are supreme; the laws are of their making, and magistrates are their servants. In an autocracy, the will of an individual—king, emperor, pope, or mikado, no matter what he may be called—makes and unmakes the laws, and all the functionaries of government are his servants. Just so a theocracy is that state or commonwealth in which the law is God's law, and the government is administered by magistrates who are his servants.

Such was the Hebrew theocracy. Egypt had a king; and Israel in Egypt was under his power. Israel, delivered from that bondage and brought over the Red Sea, had no king but God. He had delivered his chosen people; he alone was to be Lord over them. His message to them was: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." To that message the nation, through its constituted representatives, made answer: "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Ex. 19:4–8. This was the covenant between the nation and its king. In performing the covenant on his part, God became a law-giver to that people. He gave them from Sinai the ten commandments which are the summary of all human duty. Those ten commandments were his great "testimony" to his people; the tables of stone on which they were graven were the "tables of

*I take the liberty of referring to a lecture on Hebrew Theocracy in the "Boston Lectures" for 1871, published by the Congregational Publishing Society, pp. 171–195. The statements in that lecture are a better illustration of the subject than there is room for here.

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testimony;" the ark in which the tables were preserved as the most sacred possession was "the ark of the testimony." It was also "the ark of the covenant," for the "testimony" given in the ten commandments *was* "the covenant." Ex. 25: 15, 21; 31: 18; 34: 28; Lev. 34: 14, 15; Deut. 4: 13; 9: 9, 11, 15. The violation of those commandments was the breaking of God's covenant, and it was by keeping that covenant that Israel was to be a kingdom of priests unto God.

We may understand more clearly what the theocracy was, if we will exclude from our conception of it certain notions which are often confounded with it, but which do not belong to it. 1. It is often supposed that a theocracy is or implies a government by *priests*. But such was not the theocracy over Israel. There was indeed a priesthood; but Aaron had no political function or power, and it was not till long after the captivity that the high priest became the ruler of the people. 2. The theocracy was not a particular *form* of government. When Israel came out of Egypt the twelve tribes were not an unorganized rabble. They had retained, through all their sojourn in that land, their ancient government by *sheiks*, or "elders." Nor did Moses make any considerable change in that respect. The theocracy did not take the place of that patriarchal government which Israel had inherited from Abraham and from remoter ancestors, and which still subsists among the cognate races that now inhabit Palestine and adjoining regions. When the covenant was instituted by which Israel was acknowledged as God's peculiar people, and God was acknowledged as the one God and Lord of Israel, there was no violent or sudden change in the structure of society. The elders remained, some of them princes of tribes, and others heads of "families," or clans, and others heads of "households." Josh. 7: 14–18. The theocracy was superinduced upon the previously existing arrangements for civil government. 3. We should also remember that the relation of God to Israel, the special relation which we call the theocracy, was not a government by *miraculous intervention* constantly repeated. Let us not forget to make the very simple distinction between the miraculous manifestation of Divine power which introduced and authenticated the theocracy, and that Divine government over Israel which they introduced and authenticated. Let us not forget that whatever there was of miraculous inspiration in the great leaders and prophets by whom the theocracy was administered or vindicated, the occasional and individual inspiration was one thing, and God's constant relation to Israel as king was another thing. The theocracy was not a government without human agency, or without the ordinary instrumentality of second causes.

What was it then? It was the fact that Israel alone among the nations worshiped the true and only God; acknowledged him as the one supreme law-giver; trusted in his protection; was guided by leaders whom he raised up; was taught by prophets who were his messengers, and was the depository of mysterious and marvelous promises from God for "all the families of the earth." This fact, more than their common language, which was the language of other nations also, more than the common ancestry which they shared with Ishmael and with Edom, was what made them one nation. As we have our national motto, "E PLURIBUS UNUM," so they had theirs, "HEAR, O ISRAEL, JEHOVAH THY GOD IS ONE JEHOVAH." The twelve tribes were one people, because they had one God, their law-giver and king; one law, the law of God; one national worship at one altar; one ark of the covenant; one tabernacle of the congregation; one passover memorial.

In the book of Judges we have a somewhat fragmentary history of a period commonly supposed to have been about three hundred years. It is the story of a perpetual conflict between

opposing tendencies — times of apostasy from God and of assimilation to the heathen alternating with times of reformation — periods of disaster and subjugation alternating with memorable deliverances and consequent freedom — the loose confederacy of tribes falling into dissolution and anarchy with every lapse into idolatry, but the consciousness of national unity, and with it victory and prosperity, returning when the people return to God. From first to last there is a striking and instructive sameness in the alternations of the story. "The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel." "All that generation were gathered to their fathers, and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim, and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them." "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of spoilers that spoiled them." Judges 2: 7–14; (read the whole chapter.) This is the key-note of the history, and how often does it return! "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgat the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years. And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer," "Othniel, the son of Kenaz." "And the land had rest forty years." 3: 7–11. Next, when Othniel had died, "the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord." "So the children of Israel served Eglon, the king of Moab, eighteen years. But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera," etc. 3: 12–15. Then, after four score years of peace, "the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord," breaking again their covenant with him; and the consequence was that Jabin, a Phenician king who reigned in Hazor, "mightily oppressed them" twenty years. Under that oppression, as before, "the children of Israel cried unto the Lord;" and Deborah and Barak were raised up; and then, under the restored theocracy, "the land had rest forty years." Chaps. 4, 5. Another lapse into idolatry, and lo! the Midianites, like grasshoppers for multitude, swept over the land with their ravages seven years. Then, when the impoverished Israelites "cried unto the Lord," there came a prophet with the message, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage," "and I said unto you, I am the Lord your God, fear not the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice." Thus calling them to repentance, God raised up another hero and deliverer, Gideon, under whom "the country was in quietness forty years." 6: 1–10. Then the same old story of apostasy begins again, "It came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again," "and remembered not the Lord their God." 8: 33, 34. A long course of years is filled with confusion and apparent disintegration; and then we are told how far the apostasy had proceeded: "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord and served him not." Oppressed by the Philistines on one side and the Ammonites on the

other, they "cried unto the Lord:" and the answer was, "Go cry to the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you." Taught by many a bitter experience, they "said unto the Lord, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee, deliver us only this day." A national reformation followed; "they put away the foreign gods that were among them, and served the Lord." The story is not yet ended, but (in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews) "the time would fail me to tell of Samson and of Jephthah," and the rest.

Passing over we know not how wide a chasm from the book of Judges to the first book of Samuel, we find a new aspect of affairs. Instead of wild, warlike men raised up as deliverers, for a time of reformation, we find an aged high priest residing in the national sanctuary at Shiloh, and apparently combining with his sacerdotal functions something of civil government. Instead of foreign idolatries, we see a shameful abuse of the Divine institutions. The priesthood, as represented by the two sons of Eli, is becoming rapacious and dissolute, so that honest men "abhor the offering of the Lord," and gross licentiousness invades the precincts of the sanctuary. We see degeneracy again, as of old, the precursor of calamity. The ark of the covenant, instead of being carefully guarded in its holy tabernacle, is carried into battle, is taken captive, and when it has been marvelously brought back the people are afraid of it. Shiloh has been made desolate; the tabernacle disappears; the sacred ark finds an obscure resting-place; and there is no national sanctuary to which the tribes go up. But meanwhile God has been raising up a new deliverer and reformer, unlike the warrior judges in the foregoing ages. Samuel, consecrated from his birth to the service of God, has grown, and the Lord has been with him; and "all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba" has heard of him, and knows that he is "established to be a prophet of the Lord." At his call they put away their foreign gods, the Baalim and the Ashtaroth; and all the tribes, acknowledging again that "JEHOVAH their God is one JEHOVAH," know that they are one nation.

Years of prosperity follow. We are told, "the Philistines were subdued, and came no more into the land of Israel;" "the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored." No such judge had Israel known since Joshua the conqueror. But as Samuel grew old, the burthen of public affairs was too great for him, and he was introducing his two sons into his work, as if it were theirs by inheritance. His sons—alas for him and for Israel!—"walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre and took bribes, and perverted judgment."

Surely we have seen something like this. Is there not still extant a sort of public men who value a place of public trust in proportion as "there's money in it," and who use their opportunities only to get money out of it?—men in high places of public influence whose influence is understood to be obtainable if a reasonable consideration is judiciously deposited "where it will do the most good"?—men who "pervert judgment" sacrificing the public faith and debauching the public sense of honesty, for the sake of party interests, identified with interests of their own? Is there not a political and moral lesson for all ages in the sequel of the story?

The people were disgusted. Was it for this that their loose confederacy of tribes had grown into a national union, unbroken "from Dan even to Beersheba"? Should they endure to see their national affairs managed in the interest of a family, even though it were the family of so great and honored a benefactor as Samuel? A change in the form of government was proposed, but nothing was attempted in the way of insurrection or violence. It was a peaceful revolution by a national convention of those who were regarded as legitimately representing the people. "All the

elders of Israel"—not a few of them, but all, the princes of tribes, the sheiks of clans, the rulers of the people—"gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said to him, Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." (Read 1 Sam. 8.)

There was no great wisdom in the proposal, politically considered. We can not wonder that Samuel opposed it, not only because of the disrespect to him and his sons, but on higher grounds of patriotism. He prayed for Divine guidance and was answered. He was taught that the people's choice in regard to the form of their government must prevail. He was reminded that as they were then forsaking him, so they had often forsaken the Lord and served other gods. Yet he was to remonstrate against the folly of substituting for their federal commonwealth, simple as it was, and liable to abuses, the costly and demoralizing splendor of a monarchy. He did so remonstrate, in words to be forever remembered. "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel," for a disgusted and exasperated people are not always wise, "and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." So God "gave them a king in his anger."

Yet observe two things:

1. The establishment of a monarchy was not the end of the theocracy. Saul was king, but Samuel was greater than Saul, and "judged Israel all the days of his life." The law in Israel was still to be God's law; and the king, like every subordinate officer, was to be God's servant. In the time of David and Solomon the theocracy was no less a fact than in the times of Gideon and Jephthah.

2. The monarchy, which was expected to consolidate the nation, and which answered that purpose in some sort for a season, resulted in disunion. At the end of the third reign, the evils predicted by Samuel had become intolerable; and the tribes separated from each other, ten against two. Consolidation caused disunion, and disunion established the worship of Egyptian bulls at Bethel.

SAUL.

BY REV. W. A. BARTLETT.

THE character of Saul can not be struck out with a few bold dashes. It has variety of light and shade. No human life obeys the sensational moralists and runs on an inclined plane either up or down. The road to destruction or virtue is ravined with ascents and descents, pits and pinnacles. Saul's character boldly individualizes his times. The surroundings of crudeness, fierceness, and barbarism, through which he must express himself, are not of his forming. The staple of human nature through all ages is quite unvarying. Character arrives at status through different tests, but the result is identical. The cariatides support the structure whether carved by the inspired chisel of Praxiteles or by the mercenary hand of a modern mason. Softness and overweening tenderness when God commands extreme measures are as criminal to-day as when Saul spattered blood so freely. There is much superficial unappreciation of the grand roots of virtue and vice in these frequent attempts to mollify or apologize for those fierce histories of the Old Testament. They are monuments of an age when the spiritual fact of obedience to God was translated into physical happiness, and and when disobedience fruited in suffering and death. There is no covering up that fiat in nature and soul by tawdry

words. Saul's character sets in striking contrast this very old yet eternally operating law of "life in God and death in defying God."

If Israel must have a king, God will select him. Saul fairly shone with physical beauty, according to the notions of the period. His perfect proportions sweeping up till his broad muscular shoulders and large, shapely head, swarth with glistening locks, and orbed with brilliant, soul-full eyes, lifted him up a physical king at least. Youth and beauty were his. Brawn, not brain, is worshiped. Yet he is not chosen king for this. God chose him. He seeks his father's stray asses and strays into a kingdom. The politicians of this day would have written up in the daily papers that Saul, a precocious, long-headed youth, took a wise old servant and sought out the prophet Samuel, and, convincing him that a revolution was imminent, persuaded him to anoint him king, and join him in getting control of the people. Samuel consented. Others less sinister would say it was a streak of luck. He blundered into it. It was the servant who proposed to Saul to consult Samuel, and out of so little a matter as hunting up stray cattle and having an intelligent servant, Saul stumbled onto the throne. Believe this who choose. There is a loftier way of looking at this human life. God prepared Samuel for Saul's coming, and sent Saul to meet him. Oh! how assuring to faith to rest in so grand a fact, that God rules ever, and in all least as all greatest acts. Happy is the youth who obeys God's early call to him for his life occupation. Saul did. Saul, of the insignificant tribe of Benjamin, of the ordinary family of Matri, the son of Kish. Could he believe his own senses? What sensations seize that youth as he feels himself selected of God for so exalted a mission! How can he fulfill it? What does he know about king craft?

To-day a throne is so hedged with the precedents of ages that a king can not blunder. He runs like a car on a railway — the track is sure. Then there were no precedents; he is to strike out a highway across a new continent. *Next comes the preparation. He takes tuition of Samuel.* He goes to the prophets. He receives another heart — change of heart. He is inspired to prophecy. Amazing days, those first recognitions of the Spirit of the living God! Marvelous transformation to see life under the light of heaven — under the glare of eternity — to survey time and judgment and death and glory and man and God and destiny! Most young men have phases more or less of such a vision. Oh, how it lives in the soul, and the recollection of it burns away the dross of after misdoing! God has prepared him. God alone can prepare any man for any life-work. Books and professors have their place. Diligence and obedience are necessary, but in any high ideal of life God is the one who girds for exalted service.

To Mizpeh to be chosen of the people! The holy oil of Samuel's giving is only God's coronation. The formalities must follow. Cast the lot. Tribe, Benjamin — family, Matri — son of Kish — Saul — Where is he? Bring him forth from the hiding-place his modesty selected. Isn't he splendid? Hear the shout, spontaneous, as this lithe, elastic youth, beaming with the consciousness of his future, leaps before the multitude. Hear it ring out from a nation the first time on earth: "God save the king!" There is no more fascinating portrayal of prosperous and noble young manhood. *Not now* does he assume dignity and dictation. There is a murmur of disapproval amongst the sons of Belial. Will there ever be an assemblage of any sort, civil or religious, without a son of Belial? Saul goes back to his plow and his father. Kingly sense of *service*. Mere words and ceremonies do not make real kings or men. They make puppets. It is the man who makes the office. The occasion comes. Nahash, the Ammonite, proposes to put out the right eyes of the cowardly people of Jabesh-Gilead as

a reproach upon *Israel.* This is Saul's opportunity to elect himself king. He seizes the cattle with which he is plowing and cuts them in pieces and sends strips of their bloody flesh with fleet messengers to arouse the nation. What a terrible missal! How that red beacon blazes along the highways! How earnest an appeal — come, fight for country and eyes, or your cattle and eyes are in peril! They came 300,000 strong, and Saul waded in victory. Now to Gilgal, shout the nation; let us make him king in earnest; king because we need him — because he delivers and is kingly. Now seal it with offerings and sacrifices to God. Saul is God's own appointed king. He is as truly noble and grand a monarch as was possible to the period. So far Saul is a model for any life. We need not modify or stint praise. A man who knows enough to allow himself to be passively taken up of God and put in his place is educated. Obstinate resistance of God's design for us at the first often *miscarries a life.* Saul does not fall in a day. His first noticeable fault does not look aggravated. He is about to go to battle. He has waited seven days by agreement with Samuel. He dare not pitch the battle without sacrifice to God. Samuel delays. Bring hither the wood and the sacrifice. Kings can not forever wait for prophets. They ought to wait for God. For a modern king to delay an attack till the ministers of God came to the front to hold a prayer meeting would seem ridiculous. It was different then. Saul was God's king. He must obey. Overzeal is disobedience. It is difficult for some rattle-headed saints to understand this. God does not call a man to be a lunatic, neglect his family, his work. The human family must be cared for. It is more holy at times to tarry than to rush. Saul set up his opinion against God's. From this time there was a sense of self-sufficiency. War followed war. Samuel, God's representative, is slighted by Saul. He is becoming accustomed to power. God commands him to exterminate the Amalekites. He wreaks terrific vengeance on the poorest of the herds and stuff and the common men, but the fattest of the sheep and the fascinating king he spares. Not from any modern notions of humanity but for selfish reasons. Samuel detects his defiance of God and Saul plays the hypocrite. He has preserved the cattle for sacrifice to God. His modern successor is the merchant who swindles in his business in order that he may be liberal at the contribution box. The thief who steals to pay his pew rent. God demanded little of that age — the child's duty of obedience — no nice discriminations. Saul deliberately defied God. There is a natural issue to such defiance. Recklessness was precipitated by Samuel's withdrawal. Then a career of rudderless swimming around the vortex. Murdering God's prophets for attempting to honor their king by befriending his son-in-law, David — jealousy — revenge — the fully perfected works of the flesh. They call him lunatic — troubled with an evil spirit from the Lord. He was all of that, though not from physical malady nor mental aberation, but because he was consciously detached from God. God is the center of a sane mind — of a secure and poised character. Insanity must result from God's withdrawal. A troubled ocean casting up mire and dirt, raging fire, chaotic bewilderment do not phrase this insanity of sin. It is the unseating of the mind from its only firm pedestal.

Years of crime succeed. He is once more invaded by spiritual influences. It is a skylight in a long, dark tunnel. His old spirit of prophecy returns. He arouses. He fasts and humbles himself, and in recollections of innocent youth and holy promises, he dwells a day. What a mystery is the history of a human soul! He is reconciled to David, whom he had plotted for years to murder. How can we hope to analyze any character and come to secure judgment of it. We can not here. "*Judge not*" will bear the full reprimand *of literal*

construction. Sad and humiliating is the sight of this once holy king forsaken of God, seeking the aid of a witch. He is *disguised* at night and hears from the witch, who assumes to see Samuel resurrected, his doom on the morrow, and the extermination of his house. Haggard watches, night, insanity, death, ruin, is the inevitable issue of unrepented *selfishness.* In Saul's bold life it is drawn vigorously and in bright colors. The same law is not repealed. The same vengeance resides in all nature's laws — in laws of morality — in social and national life. Your opinion that it is cruel will not withhold the Lord from killing your innocent child which walks off the roof. Man was made to live and come to his growth only in filial relation to God.

We dare not commit the folly of estimating Saul from his worst act. You do not find out a man's character by that one fraud or lie or meanness. It may be the very bottom which his character touches but once. The loftier, inspired moods are not the average. There is no average in character. It is made of the ore of will and motive in the fierce crushes and furnaces of temptation and trial. Looking at the ore or the process would give no idea of the shine and uses of the pure silver. Saul is with his judge. David records his mourning by a charitable and exalted threnody: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places. How are the mighty fallen?" "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided"! Duty and desire must dictate to every sympathetic heart to say the best things we know of the dead.

THE PROPHET SAMUEL.

BY REV. WM. W. PATTON, D. D.

THERE are few names in the Bible with more interesting associations than that of the prophet Samuel. It is linked, as are but one or two others, with the tender memories of early childhood, when our pious mothers taught us at their knee from the sacred pages, and we listened with entranced attention to the story of the consecrated boy, who lived in the house of God, and to whom came, in the still night-hours, the repeated call, "Samuel, Samuel"! And to our maturer studies the name represents gravest events in church and state, among God's ancient people, resulting in far-reaching changes, and the institution of monarchy and the prophetic office. Of late, also, current delusions bring him to mind as an inhabitant of the spirit world, in connection with the midnight scene in the house of the witch-medium of Endor. Jew and Gentile, Christian and Mohammedan have come under the impress of his sanctity, and have done honor to his high position and lasting renown. The occasional allusions by the Scriptural writers of later periods invariably bear witness to the respect cherished for his memory, as that of a man of remarkable purity of character and power with God. He is named with the most eminent saints: "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them." Ps. 99:6. "Thus saith the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people." Jer. 15:1. Fortunately we have a somewhat full account of his life, from birth to death, and are able to picture to ourselves his appearance and career.

His father's name was Elkanah, and (1 Sam. 1:1) he is called "an Ephrathite;"

a title which in the book of Ruth means an inhabitant or native of Ephrath, which was the original name of Bethlehem. Ruth 1:2. But here it is commonly taken to mean Ephraimite, as in 1 Kings 11:26. Yet it is worthy of consideration whether the former meaning is not more consistent with the words of Samuel to Saul (1 Sam. 10:2): "When thou art departed from me to-day then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre;" which sepulchre was in the outskirts of Bethlehem. Gen. 35:19. Moreover, Elkanah did not belong to the tribe of Ephraim, but to that of Levi, being descended from Kohath. (See 1 Chron. 6:16, 22–28.) His residence was in Ramathaim-zophim, which is more commonly given in the shorter form, Ramah, and signifies a high point for watchmen. It has not as yet been identified, though Bonar places it at Er-Ram, near Bethlehem, just east of Rachel's tomb, while the local tradition assigns it to Neby Samwil, a lofty mountain, four miles north-west of Jerusalem, where the reputed tomb of the prophet is shown. Elkanah was a man of substance, and had two wives; a fact which resulted, as usual, in family discord, for Hannah, the favorite wife, was childless, and was taunted for her misfortune by Peninnah, her rival, who had numerous children. Hannah was of deep religious character, and when the family offered their annual sacrifice at the tabernacle in Shiloh, she offered an importunate prayer for a son, vowing to consecrate him to the service of God, as a Nazarite. Num. 6:1–5. The prayer was answered, and she named the child Samuel,—the word in Hebrew meaning either "asked of God" or "heard of God." Curiously, his own characteristic in after life was earnestness and success in prayer. She kept him at home till after the weaning, which in those lands did not fully take place till about the end of the third year. Then she carried him to Shiloh and presented him to Eli, the high priest, and in the spirit of a propheteſs burst forth in a sublime song of triumph (1 Sam. 2:1–10) which formed the model of the ecstatic "Magnificat" of the Virgin Mary, recorded by Luke. 1:46–55.

Coming thus of prophetic stock, inheriting an organization peculiarly susceptible of impression from the spiritual realm, the child Samuel ministered in the tabernacle, in all helpful ways, under the training of Eli. He wore a linen ephod, or band, on his breast and around his waist, and his mother brought him every year "a little coat," or rather, mantle, or cloak, which reached to the feet. His uncut hair flowed over his shoulders. It was an age of general corruption, and vice had entered the family of Eli, whose two sons were notoriously profligate, and had not been sufficiently restrained by him. God was pleased to mark the call of Samuel to the prophetic office quite early, by announcing with great explicitness his purpose to bring terrible retribution upon Eli, his sons, and the whole nation. That this fearful word should come to an unsuspicious child, not more than ten or twelve years of age, and who at first mistook, in his simplicity, the voice of God for the voice of Eli, renders the narrative especially touching. The blow did not fall, however, till Samuel had reached manhood, and then it crushed the whole family of Eli, desolated the sanctuary, and reduced the people to shame and distress. By that time it had become known to "all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." Perhaps it was his announcement of the coming overthrow that led the Israelites to the desperate experiment of carrying the ark itself to battle; as if to compel God to give them the victory, lest his sacred ark should fall into the hands of idolators, and the true religion be destroyed. Nevertheless, the bolt of wrath descended; the Israelites were defeated, the ark was captured by the Philistines, the sons of Eli were slain, Eli himself fell dead at the tidings, and Shiloh went into such utter desolation as to become a proverbial warning, so that through

Jeremiah God said: "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel." 7: 12.

Twenty years elapse before we hear anything more from Samuel. But everybody knew him from his peculiar appearance. The Nazarite vow was upon him for life, as it had been upon Samson. He went to and fro, on divine errands, with his long locks streaming down his back, and his beard hanging upon his breast, while his dignified mantle clothed him to his feet. 1 Sam. 1: 11; 15: 27; 28: 14. There was that in his face and manner which filled the people with awe and reverence. And now came the time when, as one in the succession of Judges, he was to act as the national deliverer, and to rally the tribes against their oppressors, the Philistines. He was not, indeed, himself a warrior, like Jephthah, or Gideon, or Samson; but he could inspire the army, and he could prevail in their behalf in prayer to God. And so he gathered them to Mizpeh, where their great defeat had occurred, offered a solemn sacrifice, and, with loud and piercing cry, called upon Jehovah to save his people. At that very moment the enemy made an assault, confident of victory. But the Israelites, aided by a terrific thunderstorm, put them to flight with a great slaughter, so that they relinquished their previous conquests, and remained at peace for twenty-five years. Samuel set up a huge stone, as a monument of this signal deliverance, which was known by the name Eben-ezer, "the stone of help" —a name precious to saints ever since, as a memorial of the readiness of God to aid those who put their trust in him. It appears in the familiar lines of John Newton:

> "Here I raise mine Ebenezer;
> Hither by thy help I've come."

Samuel was through this period the recognized chief magistrate, held in universal honor. He had been for some time married, and two sons had been born to him. He fixed his residence at Ramah, his birth-place, where he built an altar, and whence he made a narrow circuit yearly to the three sacred places, Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, to judge the cases brought before him. And from what is said of Saul's seeking him, to learn about his father's lost asses, it would appear that the people resorted to him for help in all emergencies, private or public, having great faith in his prophetic knowledge. And so the years quietly glided by, till old age began to silver his long locks and flowing beard, when an unexpected change occurred. This was a political revolution, brought about not by bloody violence, or on ground of personal hostility, but by a peaceful though firm demand, occasioned by a new peril of foreign invasion, and by the misconduct of his sons. Nahash, king of Ammon, threatened war, and Samuel was no military leader. 1 Sam. 12: 12. He could only pray! As if that had not always sufficed. And then, as age came on, he had made his sons his assistants in the far south at Beersheba, where they had been guilty of taking bribes and perverting justice. How shall we account for this failure of Samuel, with Eli's family history before him, to secure a pious character in his sons? By supposing the influence of two things, which have often operated in similar cases,—a bad or incompetent wife, and the absorbing cares of public life. Nothing is said of Samuel's wife, but we may easily imagine that, like many another great man, he had married a woman unequal to him in character and ability, whose weak indulgence and worldly disposition brought ruin to the children. And then, public men too often neglect home duties. Even ministers sometimes busy themselves so exclusively in church affairs that they omit to train their own households (leaving all to the mothers), and the result is, that the cause of God suffers more from the misconduct of their children than it gains from their professional efforts. And so Samuel lost his judgeship in part

through the evil deeds of his sons. The people resolved on a radical change, which should make them like the surrounding nations in national unity and military power. They therefore sent their elders to Ramah, to demand from Samuel an abdication in favor of some one whom he, in the exercise of his wisdom, should designate to be their king. They clamored for a monarchy, while willing that he should continue to be their teacher and adviser, as the recognized prophet of God.

This proposition was a sore trial to Samuel; it was a rejection of himself, after long and faithful service; and it was an unbelieving attempt to change a divine arrangement. He therefore opposed it earnestly. But when, according to his custom, he had carried the matter to God, to his great astonishment he received direction to yield to the demand of the people, after explaining to them the forms of oppression which would attend the rule of a king as well as of a judge. God saw that, in the laxity of morals and the prevalent disorder, it was well for the people to pass beyond a patriarchal confederacy of tribes presided over by a judge so peculiarly appointed, and to enter upon a new stage of national history, in which unity and consolidation should develop military power, and should secure safety, extended rule, and a higher civilization. He looked forward to the days of David and Solomon. Then Samuel peacefully, and with self-sacrifice, inaugurated the eventful change. The Lord soon sent to him the tall, handsome, warlike Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, whom he anointed to be the first king of Israel. The scene of his own abdication and farewell address was deeply impressive, and has not often been paralleled. He addressed the assembled tribes at Gilgal in these touching words of conscious integrity: "And now behold the king walketh before you; and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed; whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you." 1 Sam. 12:2,3. This appeal brought forth a universal attestation of his just dealing as a man and as a magistrate. He then reviewed the national history with its marked divine deliverances, and exposed the sin of unbelief which was connected with their late conduct, predicting a sudden thunder-storm that day as a sign of divine displeasure; it being a dry season of the year when storms were unknown. The sign came true, the people were filled with alarm, and besought his intercession. He assured them of forgiveness, and promised to pray for them continually, and for their king. And he seems ever to have retained a strong interest in the moody and wayward Saul, even after his wilfulness and his jealousy of David had filled him with vindictiveness and murder, and precluded the prophet from personal interviews. 1 Sam. 15:35; 16:1.

Having thus finished his work as judge, Samuel magnified the other grand part of his career in being the founder of the order of prophets. Others, from the beginning of time, had uttered occasional prophecies; but the Bible recognizes Samuel as the first of the regular prophetic order. Acts. 3:24; 13:20. His life had ever been principally devoted to duties of this class, and its closing years were wholly occupied with them. He was known as "The Seer" (1 Sam. 9), because he could look into the secrets of the past and of the future. He had also instituted a school of the prophets (10:5, 10), where choice young men were trained in religious knowledge and sacred music, and were fitted for inspired use in various ways. For the utterance of predictions was a very small part of what was called "prophesying," whether in the Old Testament or in the New. The word denoted any speaking which

was divinely prompted. The prophets taught the people the principles of religion, rebuked them for their sins, encouraged them to expect divine aid in times of danger, and denounced the corruptions of the priesthood and the oppressions of the kings and rulers. The prophetic order thus became a great power in the nation, and kept the needed balance against the civil tyranny of the kings, and the ecclesiastical despotism of the priests. In the discharge of this important function Samuel continued till the end of life, and the order which he thus founded was the percursor of the Christian ministry; which was not copied, as some wrongly suppose, from the Jewish priesthood, in any respect, but from the Jewish prophets. The hour of final departure came at an extreme age, perhaps that of ninety years, and when he died the nation felt as if it had lost a father, and there was universal mourning, and an immense concourse at the funeral. His own residence seems to have been turned into a sepulchre (1 Sam. 25: 1), unless we suppose the phrase, "his house at Ramah," refers not to his actual dwelling-house, but to the town as his home. Ordinarily, death ends the known relation of a man to this world's affairs; but the Scripture reveals a curious exception in the case of Samuel. His body had lain in the tomb for four years, when king Saul found himself on the eve of a battle with the Philistines, and could gain no answer to his agonizing appeals to God, who had abandoned him. Driven to desperation, he betook himself to a witch, or female "medium," as she would now be called, at Endor, and besought her to call up the spirit of Samuel. 1 Sam. 28: 7, etc. And behold, the well-known form came forth, "an old man, covered with a mantle," and in solemn tones rebuked the king for his sin, and predicted his death on the morrow, on the battle-field, where Israel would be utterly defeated. And with this weird re-appearance we reach the close of the account of a grand old character, who stands forth as the connecting link between two important epochs of the history of God's ancient people—the LAST OF THE JUDGES and the FIRST OF THE PROPHETS!

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XXIII.—JUNE 6, 1875.—SAMUEL THE JUDGE.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel 7: 5-12. Commit 5-12; Primary Verse, 8.

5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 **And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.**

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"**By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted.**"—PROV. 11: 11.

TOPIC.—REPENTANT—TRIUMPHANT.

HOME READINGS.

M. Ex. 17: 8-16.....The Prayer of Moses for the People.
T. Num. 12: 1-16.....The Prayer of Moses for Miriam.
W. 1 K. 18: 20-39..... The Prayer of Elijah at Carmel.
Th. Ezra 9: 1-15.....The Prayer of Ezra for the People.
F. Ps. 56: 1-13.....David's Prayer at Gath.
S. Jas. 5: 12-20.....The Power of Prayer.
S. Heb. 9: 1-28.....Our Great Intercessor.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE ARK.—What became of the ark? 5: 1. What happened to Dagon and to the people of Ashdod? 5: 2–7. Where was it next taken? 5: 8. What took place there? Where next was it taken? 5: 10. Did a similar affliction visit them of Ekron? 5: 11, 12. What steps did they take to get rid of it? 6: 1, 2. What reply did the diviners make? 6: 3–9. What did the diviners think these plagues were like? 6: 6. What do you think was their object in selecting cows that had calves? When they tried the plan, what was the result? 6: 10–12. To what place did it go? 6: 14. How was it received? 6: 13. What was done then by the men of Beth-shemesh? 6: 15–18. What bad thing did they do, and how did they suffer for it? 6: 19. Where next was the ark taken? 6: 20, 21; 7: 1. How long did it stay there? 2.

SAMUEL'S EXHORTATION.—What did Samuel exhort the people to do? 3. What "strange gods" had they been serving? 4. Can you tell who Baal and Ashtaroth were? What does he promise that God will do for them if they return unto him and put away their idols? 3. Read Deut. 30: 1-3, and see if you think he had a right to promise that.

ISRAEL'S OBEDIENCE.—At what place did Samuel assemble all Israel? 5. Mizpeh was near where Jerusalem now is. What did Samuel promise to do for them when they came together? 5. What was to be the object of his prayer? 3. Had they put away their idols? 4. What did the people do at Mizpeh? 6. Why did they fast? Why did they pour out water before the Lord? If you can not find out, ask your teacher. What did the people say? 6. What did Samuel do? 6. What is meant by "judged"?

ISRAEL'S FRIGHT.—What were they frightened at? 7. What did they do? 8. Do you think that indicated faith in God? Should you say that now they were putting any trust in idols?

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE.—What did Samuel first do? 9. A "burnt offering" signifies that the one who offers it gives himself and all that he has wholly up to the Lord. As this lamb was offered for the whole people, what did it signify? Did the Lord hear Samuel? How did the people know that he did? 10. How did the thunder affect the Philistines? What did the men of Israel do? 11. Was their victory permanent? 13. What cities did they retake by it? 14. How did Samuel celebrate the victory? 12.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE ARK.—5: 1–12. Taken at first by the victorious Philistines to Ashdod, (called *Azotus* Acts 8: 40), and put into the temple of Dagon—thus signifying that the capture of the ark was a triumph of Dagon over Jehovah. The next morning Dagon was fallen down before the ark. Supposed to be an accident. But the next morning he was fallen down again, and this time his head and hands were broken off—only Dagon was left to him. Dagon had the head and hands of a man and tail of a fish. It was, therefore, the fishy part that was called Dagon. This last fall and the position of the head and the hands of the mutilated idol, "on the threshold," were the cause of a peculiar custom that lasted as late as the reign of Josiah. No one that came into the temple of Dagon at Ashdod set their foot upon the threshold, but leaped over it. Zeph. 1: 9. The narrative does not say that in their broken idol the inhabitants of Ashdod immediately saw an impotent deity overturned by a God possessed of all power. They came to this conclusion by steps, probably, instead of jumping to it, for after they were afflicted with emerods (a corruption of *hemorrhoids*) then they confessed: "His hand is sore upon us and upon Dagon, our God." "The hand of the Lord was *heavy* upon them of Ashdod."

Gath.—Ashdod could stand it no longer, so a council of the lords of the Philistines was called to see what should be done with the ark. Already they were beginning to feel that their triumph in taking it was not so great after all. And already God was vindicating his honor, though not in the way prescribed by the

Israelites when they brought it into the camp to make use of it against their enemies. The council decreed that the ark should go to Gath. Gath is smitten as Ashdod was. But this time it is recorded: "The hand of the Lord was against the city *with a very great destruction.*"

Ekron.—Next this troublesome trophy is taken to Ekron. The Ekronites welcome it as they would a calamity instead of an honor. Stories of its judgments upon Gath and Ashdod have preceded it, and they cry out: "They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to slay us and our people." And they were true prophets, for this time it is said: "There was *a deadly destruction throughout all the city;* the *hand of the Lord was very heavy there.*" Increasingly heavy had the hand of God been on each city to which the ark was removed, until now, in the expressive phrase of the narrative: "*The cry of the city went up to heaven.*" "The men that died not were smitten with emerods." At Ashdod the plague was heavy, though it seems to have excepted large numbers there. At Gath the destruction is greater and the disease more prevalent; but at Ekron it becomes so universal, and the destruction so general that that city is led to suggest that the ark be sent "unto his own place."

The Council.—6: 1–6. The ark had been in the hands of the Philistines for seven months, and now their lords assemble to see what they should do about it. Their first council at Ashdod was to see how they would retain it—their present one to see how they would get rid of it. To their aid was called the priests and diviners. Such aid was sought for by Pharaoh of Joseph's day (Gen. 41: 8); by Pharaoh of the Exodus (Ex. 7: 11); by Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel's time (Dan. 2: 2), and Herod, after a similar manner, called together the chief priests and the scribes to find out where Christ was to be born. Matt. 2: 3, 4. The priests and diviners, ready enough to admit that Jehovah had a high place among the gods, if not recognizing his superiority to all of them, counsel that the ark be not returned without a trespass offering. The trespass offering that they advise is five golden images of the plagues that have troubled them—and from this we learn that they had been vexed with mice as well as emerods. The practice of making images of the things that had distressed them and offering them to their patron deity was no uncommon matter with the ancients. Rescued sailors presented pictures of their shipwreck; freed slaves made an offering of their chains; gladiators, who had survived the struggles of the arena, gave in consecration their arms to Hercules; and even Christians in the fifth century made golden images of hands and feet and eyes to give to the Lord because of the cures that had been effected in those members of the body.

The familiarity that these priests and diviners exhibit with the similar judgments brought upon Pharaoh and his people, and their strong comparison of the two circumstances (6) are at least remarkable, and show that all the particulars of the Exodus were as well known to all the neighboring nations as to the Israelites themselves. That story had penetrated everywhere, even as the story of the cross has done—both being narratives of divine deliverance.

Their Plan.—7–9. Two milch cows, upon which no yoke had ever come, to be separated from their calves, tied to a new cart (for faith in the virtue of new things see Judg. 16: 7, 11) in which were to be placed the ark and the coffer containing the trespass offerings, and then permitted to go whither they would. Nature would lead them to go home to their calves—God only would compel them to go to Beth-shemesh, away from their calves. So the priests and diviners reasoned, and reasoned correctly. If they go to Beth-shemesh "then we shall know," they say, "whether it is God's hand that smote us or mere chance that happened unto us."

Its Trial.—When the plan was put

into execution, God indeed proved to be stronger than nature, and the two kine, without turning to the right or left, went straight to Beth-shemesh, though lowing all the way for the calves that they left behind them.

Reception of the Ark—Was joyful. The men of Beth-shemesh in the midst of harvest lifted up their eyes and beheld it and rejoiced to see it. The two kine stopped with the ark by the side of a great stone—a natural altar, providentially pointed out; so think the men of Beth-shemesh. The two kine seem also divinely to suggest an impromptu sacrifice and the cart furnishes the wood for it. After this sacrifice the ark is put upon the stone, made sacred now by the offering that was made upon it, and the sacrifices are continued. These sacrifices pre-suppose the presence of priests among the men of Beth-shemesh. Happy for them if they had continued in well doing—if they had not let an idle curiosity tempt them to look into the ark—a desecration not even attempted by the Philistines. This had been forbidden by the most solemn injunctions. Num. 1: 50, 51; 4: 5, 16–20. The number that was smitten on account of this trespass is probably only seventy instead of fifty thousand and seventy—a mistake that has crept into the text by the error of some copyist, who very easily might mistake the Hebrew letter *ain*, meaning 70, for the letter *nun*, which, with a dot over it, denotes 50,000.

Beth-shemesh was probably only a little village, and the death of 70 men in such a place would be a judgment severely felt. Like the Philistines now they are anxious to get rid of the ark. And yet, had they been right minded, it might have blessed them as it blessed Obed-edom. 2 Sam. 6: 11. All Israel was once likewise so afraid of the tabernacle. Num. 17: 12, 13. So, also, were the Gergesenes frightened about Christ, and besought him "to depart out of their coasts," and so, like the men of Beth-shemesh, turned a blessing away.

Its Rest.—It was taken to Kirjath-jearim, and Eleazar, son of Abinadab, in whose house it found a resting-place, was sanctified to keep it. There it remained for twenty years—or, rather, it was twenty years until the lamentation of Israel after the Lord. 2. The ark remained there much longer. 2 Sam. 6: 3. The assertion in the text is only that it was twenty years after the ark entered the house of Abinadab before the events about to be narrated, and that then the ark was still there.

SAMUEL'S EXHORTATION.—3. What Samuel had been doing all these twenty years we can only infer from the fact of Israel's present repentance. No doubt that he was not idle, and that often the word of the Lord came to Israel through him, but never with such effect as now. The present obedience to it we may well believe is the result of many efforts on his part. His language implies that there has been a profession on their part of return to the Lord. He seems to be testing the sincerity of it. "If ye *do* return unto the Lord with all your hearts," he says, "then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord and serve him only." Then comes the promise—"He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines"—a promise itself based upon the promises of God as given in Lev. 26: 40–42; Deut. 4: 29, 30; 30: 1–3, and which has its New Testament illustration in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

ISRAEL'S OBEDIENCE.—At his command they put away their gods, Baalim and Ashtaroth—plural forms of Baal and Ashtoreth—thus showing that they had many of them in their midst. As Joshua gathered all the tribes at Shechem, Samuel gathers them all at Mizpeh, a locality which as we have already explained is not far from Jerusalem—a city, however, not then in existence. They came in consequence of his promise to pray for them. Poor, benighted people! wanderers from the path of prayer, they had not yet learned how to

pray for themselves. But to want to be prayed for is next to personal prayer. The one that earnestly requests the prayer of others will soon learn to pray for himself.

At Mizpeh the people "drew water and poured it before the Lord, and fasted on that day." Just what was the significance of the rite first mentioned is unknown. By some it is supposed to be the complemental act of fasting, and is the expression of a determination to drink no water while they went without food. By others it is supposed to indicate the pouring out of the heart "in penitence as it were water." By others again to be symbolical of their helplessness and need of divine aid: "We are as water spilt on the ground which can not be gathered up again." 2 Sam. 14: 14. By others, still, to be an act-prayer, typifying their desire that their sins might be forgotten "as waters that pass away." But whatever it might mean it at least expresses the penitence of Israel—a penitence expressed not only in this rite and in fasting, but also in words: "We have sinned against the Lord." Confession and filial submission to punishment for disobedience were necessary antecedents to forgiveness. Lev. 26: 40–42. It was insisted upon because confession is the natural language of a repentant soul that abhors the sin that led him astray. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." He that "covereth his sins" evidently has not repented of them—he that "confesseth and forsaketh them" wants an absolute divorce from them.

Samuel "judged" the children of Israel at Mizpeh. From the fact that this assertion is so closely connected with their confession, it would appear to have reference more especially to their sins against Jehovah. Israel, as a whole, had repented, but perhaps there were individuals who still clung to their idols, and his "judging" them was simply an examination into each case to see whether every household was purified of strange gods. Of course such a proceeding would involve the larger authority of a civil and military judgeship such as Moses at first exercised. Ex. 18: 13–16. This is the first mention of Samuel as judge, though it is likely in occasional, individual cases, he exercised the perogatives of that office during the twenty years concerning which the Scriptures are silent.

ISRAEL'S FRIGHT.—7, 8. With Israel's repentance came an immediate trial of their faith. The Philistines came up against them, and though "they were afraid" yet they did not turn their backs on God nor on the enemy. They trembled, but in their appeal to Samuel to "cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us," etc., they showed a new temper. It was the germ of faith to be completely developed by the coming interposition of God in their behalf.

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE.—9–14. The object of the gathering at Mizpeh was to prepare the hearts of the people so that the Lord might deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines. 3. The coming up of the Philistines who had heard of the assemblage and felt obliged to disperse it lest it should result in successful rebellion, providentially aided this purpose.

Samuel's preparation for battle was by sacrifice. With a young lamb (Lev. 22: 27), symbolical of this newly regenerated people, he offered a burnt offering which represented all Israel, and signified that the whole people gave themselves wholly and unreservedly to the Lord. Then he cried unto the Lord. Is it any wonder that God heard him? For forty years he had been waiting for that cry. And now the answer is so immediate that we are reminded of God's promise in Isaiah 65: 24: "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

God answered Samuel in thunder. The thunder encouraged Israel, but discomfited the Philistines. It is likely, as has been suggested, that a blinding rainstorm accompanied it which beat in the

faces of the Philistines while it beat only on the backs of the Israelites, thus rendering the former an easy prey to the latter. Be this as it may, the triumph of Israel over their foes, by this interposition of God, was so great as to secure the deliverance of the Israelites, and reinstate them in all the territory they had lost. Probably peace did not immediately follow this victory, for it is said: "The hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." They were, however, no longer the assailants, but the assailed. "Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer"—*the stone of help.* This was another "Memorial Stone." And this was the same place where twenty years before the Israelites had suffered such severe disaster, and lost the ark of God. There seems to be a poetical fitness in the fact that their great triumph—given to them on account of a restored faith—should happen on the very spot where by lack of genuine faith they had endured such a woeful reverse.

SAMUEL'S JUDGESHIP—15–17.—"Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." He was a "circuit judge," yearly visiting Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh. After Saul's accession to the throne Samuel's judgeship, of course, became merely civil and ecclesiastical. "His return was to Ramah, for there was his house, and there he judged Israel, and there he built an altar." Inasmuch as to have more than one altar, as we have already learned, was prohibited, there is reason for believing that this altar was in connection with the tabernacle, which no longer existed at Shiloh, or else was the solitary altar of Israel, erected independently of it. The first supposition receives some of its probability from 1 Chr. 21: 29, the Gibeon there mentioned being close to Ramah.

Golden Grain.

1.—We need not fear for God's honor though his ark may be in the hands of his enemies. He knows how to make the wrath of men to praise him, and to make defeat his best victory. Gen. 50: 20; Ex. 9: 16; 18: 11; Ps. 76: 10; Dan. 3: 19, 20, 28; Acts 2: 36.

2.—While we can come into God's presence with the trusting confidence of a child, we are not to treat him or his sanctuary with irreverent familiarity. Lev. 19: 30; Ps. 89: 7; 111; 9; Heb. 12: 28, 29.

3.—If ye do return to the Lord with all your heart, then put away your strange gods and prepare your heart unto the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines—from all the evil habits and temptations to which you are subject. Job 11; 13–18; Is. 55: 7; Ps. 91: 3; Rom. 6: 14; 8: 13; Gal 5: 19–21, 24; Col. 3: 5; Heb. 2: 14, 15.

4.—What joy it is to every penitent heart that there is One to whom confession can be made—One who will hear and not condemn, and who will take away the burden of sin and give peace in its stead. Job. 33: 27, 28; Ps. 32: 5; 38: 4; Matt. 11: 28; Rom. 7: 23–25; 10: 9, 10; Heb. 4: 3; 1 John 1: 9.

5.—The reason why answers to prayer are not oftener immediate is because our faith does not call for an immediate answer. True faith is not surprised at instant answers, nor dismayed if they be delayed. Dan. 9: 20–23; 10: 12; Ps. 145: 18, 19; Acts 4: 31; Luke 18: 1–7; 21: 36; Eph. 6: 18.

HYMN.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for loudest songs of praise.

Here I raise my Eben-ezer,
Hither by thy help I'm come,
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.

BLACKBOARD.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST
IS
OUR EBEN-EZER,
THE SIGN
OF GOD'S HELP.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Rehearse again the capture of the ark. Then tell where it was taken, pointing out the successive places on the map. Tell what happened at Ashdod—Dagon prostrate before the ark one morning—broken the next—the city smitten with a terrible plague—the cry of the people to take the ark away—taken to Gath—the still greater destruction there—its removal to Ekron—the fright of the Ekronites—God's hand more heavy there than at Ashdod or Gath—their cry to be delivered from it and to have it sent back to the Israelites.

2.—The ark sent back with trespass offering—in new cart—drawn by milch kine never yoked—left to go whither they would—went away from their calves straight to the Israelites. Who directed them?

3.—The stopping by the great stone—used as an altar—the two cows sacrificed on it—the sin of the men of Beth-shemesh—their punishment—the final resting-place of the ark.

4.—The gathering of the people by Samuel at Mizpeh—what he promised them in case they would put away their idols and prepare their hearts for the Lord—their obedience—their fasting and prayer—their fright on account of the Philistines—Samuel's prayer and sacrifice—God's answer in the thunder—the defeat of the Philistines and their permanent victory over the Philistines—Samuel's memorial.

HYMN.

Near the cross, O Lamb of God!
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day
With its shadow o'er me.

By the cross there's peace and hope
For the trusting ever;
It shall be our sign of help
Till we cross the river.

BLACKBOARD.

LESSON XXIV.—JUNE 13, 1875.—A KING DESIRED.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel 8: 4-9. Commit 4-9; Primary Verse, 7.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,
5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.
6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.
7 **And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.**
8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.
9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."—PSALM 118: 9.

TOPIC.—GOD'S WAY BEST.

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. 17: 1-16.....Kings Promised to Abraham.
T. Gen. 35: 1-15.....Kings Promised to Jacob.
W. Num. 24: 1-25..... ....A King Prophesied.
Th. Deut. 17: 14-20 .....What he was to do.
F. Is. 9: 2- 7.....The Greater Coming King.
S. Acts 13: 16-33.....Came, But was Rejected.
S. Mark 13: 1-27.....His Coming Triumphant Return.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

CORRUPT JUDGES.—Was it a long or a short time from the events narrated in the previous chapter to those given in this? 1. What office had Samuel given his sons? What were their names? 2. Where were they judges? Who judged the rest of Israel? 7: 15. Were the sons of Samuel good men? 3. What bad things did they do? What other good man about whom we have lately studied had bad sons? 2: 12. What command is given in Deut. 16: 19 about judges taking bribes?

THE CHANGE DESIRED.—Who came unto Samuel? 4. How many came? Where did they come? What did they want? 5. Why did they want a king? What did they want a king to do? Who was it that was then judging them? 7: 15. Samuel judged them, but in whose name? Who gave unto Samuel the great wisdom that was necessary to judge them? To ask for a king to judge them then was asking for some one else to take—whose place?

SAMUEL'S DISPLEASURE.—How did this request affect Samuel? 6. What did he do about it? What was the Lord's answer? 7-9. Samuel was displeased because he thought that Israel had rejected him. Was he really the one that they had rejected? 7.

THE PROTEST.—What was Samuel to do? 9. What did Samuel tell them would happen if they persisted in having a king? 11-18. Whose words did he use? 10. Were their sons ever taken for horsemen and to run before chariots? 14: 52; 2 Sam. 15: 1; 1 K. 1: 5. Were their vineyards ever given away? 1 K. 21: 7. Were their men-servants ever taken away and made to do the king's work? 1 K. 5: 13-18. Did the king ever take their sheep? 1 K. 4: 7, 22, 23. Did the Israelites ever cry out because of their king? 1 K. 12: 4, 14, 15. Which, then, would have been best for them—to have taken their way or God's way? Why was a king finally given them? Hos. 13: 9-11. Is it always best to have our own way? Ps. 106: 15. After Samuel had told them of the evils that would come upon them did they still persist in their desire? 19. Was their desire granted? 21, 22.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

CORRUPT JUDGES.—1-3. Samuel in his old age had appointed his sons to be judges at Beersheba. 1. They were appointed by him, not wholly to relieve him of the duties of judgeship, for these he discharged "all the days of his life," (7: 15) but to relieve him somewhat from their onerous care. They probably were local judges, such as are referred to in Deut. 16: 18. Beersheba was one of the most southern places in Palestine, the two extremes often being referred to in the familiar phrase: "From Dan to Beersheba." Beersheba was situated in

territory that must lately have been recovered from the Philistines.

Samuel's sons — of whom we would have expected better things — "took bribes and perverted judgment." They corrupted the administration of justice just as the sons of Eli had polluted the sacrificial services of the sanctuary. The sons of Samuel acted against the expressed prohibition of the divine law, the same as the sons of Eli had done, for in Deut. 16: 19 it was said: "Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous." Two godly men, each with ungodly sons! It is not such a result as we would have looked for. The very fact, however, that their defection is a surprise, is a confirmation of the belief that the natural successor of a godly father is a godly son. This exception to the rule points to the conclusion that in Samuel, as in Eli, there must have been an over-parental fondness amounting to weakness — a weakness to which good men are more liable than bad.

THE CHANGE DESIRED.— 4–5. Because of the fact that, on account of Samuel's age, his wise rule appeared to be near its end, and because his sons "walked not in his ways," the people, through their elders, besought Samuel to make them a king. To Abraham it had been promised that kings should be among his descendants. Gen. 17: 6, 16. With Jacob a similar covenant had been made. Gen. 35: 11. There had been both a prophecy of the time when the Israelites would set up a king over them, and directions as to the simplicity of his establishment. Deut. 17: 13–20. Through multiplied years, therefore, there had been the expectation of a kingdom. Once before had the people endeavored to secure it. They had entreated Gideon to be their king, but was met with the memorable reply: "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you." Judges 8: 23. He had not forgotten, though they had, that Israel had a God-King.

The ostensible reason put forth by the elders for desiring a king was that he might "judge" them. The real reason, as it afterward transpired, was that he might "go out before us and fight our battles." 20. The "judging" was only a secondary matter. In their opinion the government, as it then existed, was not strong enough for purposes of self-protection. 12: 12. It was then a theocracy — a government of which God was the supreme head. Their lack of faith in that, then, was a lack of faith in God. They turned from a theocracy to a monarchy — from God to a king. This was the deliberate act of the whole people — *all* the elders came on this errand to Ramah.

SAMUEL'S DISPLEASURE.— 6–9. Was personal, and at what he thought was a slight upon himself. He supposed at first that it was a rejection of himself and his ministry. Very likely, too, he found it hard to hear the truth told about his sons. The fact that he made no reply, but went first and prayed over the matter, gives us a wonderful glimpse into his spiritual life. The man that can pray over insults, real or fancied, before he utters a retaliatory word, is a man that has reached the perfection of self-conquest and self-control. "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city."

But God opened the eyes of his servant. "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." The putting aside of Samuel as Judge was the repudiation of the Lord who gave him his place, and spoke through him. So, too, was God rejected by their posterity when they mockingly crowned and crucified his Son. John 12: 48. Before this time, also, their ancestors murmured, as they thought, against Moses and Aaron, but really murmured against the Lord. Ex. 16: 8.

The tender consideration for Samuel manifested in God's reply to his prayer is something wonderful. It was as

though a soldier had come to his commander wailing over some slight injury, and, for answer, was shown how the same bolt that merely grazed him had sunk deeply into the heart of his patient, uncomplaining general. What was the injury to the feelings of Samuel compared with the greater suffering of the heart of God! In the presence of that divine anguish his own is mute. And afterwards we hear no more of *Samuel's* displeasure. From that time forward he acts only as the mouth-piece of God. In like manner did Christ treat his disciples, preparing them for their service of suffering by contrasting it beforehand with his own greater agony, reminding them that "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord."

THE PROTEST.— 10–18. Samuel was told by the Lord to hearken unto the voice of the people — not actually to refuse their demand, but to enter a most solemn protest against it. He was faithfully to show "the manner of the king" that would reign over them. He was to show them that the boon they desired would not be a blessing, but a curse." So he enumerates the particulars in which it would be oppressive and burdensome. For a fulfillment of the predictions in verse 11, see 14: 52; 2 Sam. 15: 1; 1 K. 1: 5. For verse 14 see 1 K. 21: 7. Also Ezek. 45: 8; 46: 18. For verse 16, see 1 K. 5: 13–18. For verse 17, see 1 K. 4: 7, 22, 23. For verse 18, see 1 K. 12: 4, 14, 15.

God's dealing with his people in this case is characteristic. If they are tired of his government, and want another, they can have it. He compels no one to serve him or take what he gives. As at Ebal and Gerizim he set before the people "life and death, blessing and cursing," but urged them to choose life. As through the lips of Joshua he enumerated the mercies that he had bestowed upon Israel, and yet gave them choice as to whether they would serve him or the gods of their fathers, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land they dwelt; so now again he places before them the two governments — the divine and the human — and bids them choose. So he sets before us his own kingdom and the kingdom of this world, and, though he pleads with us to go with him that he may do us good, yet he does not compel us to go. We are his subjects of our own free will, or not at all.

THE BOON GRANTED.— 19–22. The people were persistent. They refused to heed the warning. And the Lord granted their request: "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." Hosea 13: 11. "And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." Ps. 106: 15. It is not always best to have our own way. God may sometimes give us our own rebellious will in order that we may see how destructive to our best interests it is.

THEIR SIN.— Already we have shown that in asking for a change they desired to supplant their God with a king. But the promise of a king seems to conflict with this idea. That, however, was not so much a promise as a prediction. In all the references concerning a king that are made in the prophetic announcements of his coming, the mere fact only is stated. It is mentioned to Abraham and to Jacob as proof that their descendants would be both numerous and highly exalted. In no other way can it be said to have been looked upon with prophetic favor. On the other hand is the decidedly adverse countenance of Deut. 17: 14–20. There it is assumed that a king would do just as Samuel here predicts, and so stringent commands are given to limit his retinue and his expenditures. Monarchy was not looked upon in prevision as a thing to be rejoiced over, but as an evil to be regulated. There is not, therefore, as has been supposed, any inconsistency between the announcement of a future king for Israel, and this unwillingness on the part of God that Israel should have a king. There is no need to say that Israel was not now in a condition to have a ruler, and therefore it was that

the Lord did not wish them to have one — that later he might have been willing. God had always shown his desire to rule this people himself. They were chosen to be a peculiar people "*unto himself.*" He was their rightful ruler, and he alone. The announcement was a prediction merely, and not a sanction.

But the quality of their desire, besides, made their request specially odious. They wanted a king that they might be "like all the nations." They wanted to be "a peculiar people" no longer. They coveted the place among the nations that they thought a monarchy would give them. They rather relished the hints of kingly power, magnificence, and splendor, that were conveyed in Samuel's warning. And so by their evil persistence God had no longer a kingdom upon earth! It was taken away, never to be restored until Christ shall conquer the hearts of the world, and reign Lord of lords, and King of kings.

Golden Grain.

1.— How faithfully should the children of a good man strive to be like him! For them to do evil is to be a calamity and a reproach to their parents. Prov. 17: 25; 19: 13, 26; 30: 11; Rom. 1: 30, 31; Eph. 6: 2, 3.

2.— We never should lose faith in the church because there are corrupt people in it. It is no excuse in rejecting the government of God that the persons who represent it are not what they should be. Matt. 12: 37; Luke 8: 12; 19: 22; Rom. 3: 3, 4; 14: 12, 10; 2 Cor. 4: 3, 4; 2 Pet. 2: 1–3; 1 John 5: 10.

3.— We shall never better ourselves by turning from God to the world. Ps. 39: 6: Matt. 7: 24, 25; Mark 8: 36; John 12: 25; 1 Cor. 7; 31; 1 Pet. 1: 24; 1 John 2: 15–17.

4.— Samuel was displeased for himself when he should have been displeased for God. Yet before he gave way to his anger he sought for guidance and help in prayer. It is just such "infirmities" of the flesh that God delights to heal in praying ones. Rom. 8: 26; Heb. 4: 15, 16.

5.— God's way is the best way. The path that he chooses for us, though it seem a thorny one, leads to peace. No really good thing does he withhold from them that love him. Ps. 34: 9, 10; 84: 11; Rom. 5: 3–5; 8: 28; 2 Cor. 4: 15–17; Heb. 12: 11; Jas. 1: 12.

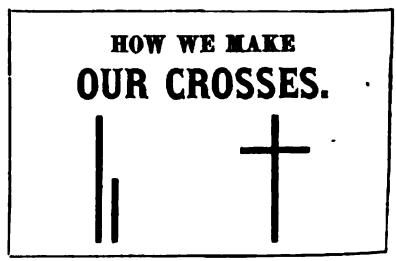
[The lesson affords an admirable opportunity to show how we make our own crosses. Draw a perpendicular line on the blackboard to represent the will of God — always upright. Draw another perpendicular line to represent the will of man. As God is infinite and man finite the last line should be much the shorter of the two. Now call attention to the fact that so long as man's will is upright, also, there is no conflict between him and the Lord. But man's will is not always upright. As in the case of the Israelites who wanted a king when the Lord did not want them to have one, our will is sometimes directly opposed to the will of God. And that (illustrating as per blackboard) is the way we make our own crosses.]

HYMN.

Whate'er Thy providence denies
I calmly would resign,
For Thou art good, and just, and wise.
Oh make my will like thine!

Help me, O God! thy purpose fill,
Thy burdens help me bear,
And do not let me cross thy will,
Nor thwart thy tender care.

BLACKBOARD.



THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.— A short time ago we learned that a high-priest, who himself was a good man, had two bad sons. (Get the children to tell, if you can, his name, the names of his sons, and the evil they did.) Now Samuel, the boy-prophet, has grown to be a man, and an old man, and he has two boys. Their names were Joel and Abiah. You know Samuel was a good man. Do you think his boys were good also? Well, we all naturally would think they were — and they ought to have been — but they were not. Samuel gave them good opportunities — made them judges at Beersheba — and, best of all, lived a holy life before them. But they did not walk in his ways, (his ways were God's ways) and they took money from wicked people, and decided in their favor when they ought to have decided against them.

2.— Result of their conduct — brought reproach on Samuel. That is what every bad boy does to a good father. People out of patience with them — wanted a king to judge them. But Joel and Abiah did not judge all Israel. God judged it through Samuel. But the people said that Samuel was getting old, and after he was dead they were afraid no such a man could be found to take his place. So all the elders of the people came to Samuel and wanted a king. But God could have raised up another Samuel, and to want a king showed that they did not trust God. (Illustrate this point thoroughly).

3.— Samuel's displeasure — cause of it — what he did (sought God in prayer before making answer) — God's reply — what Samuel told the people would happen if they had a king — the persistence of the people — the granting of their desire — the fulfillment of Samuel's predictions — God's way always the best.

HYMN.

I am Jesus' little Lamb,
Therefore glad and gay I am;
Jesus loves me, Jesus knows me,
All the way of life he shows me
Tends me every day the same,
Even calls me by my name.

BLACKBOARD.

GOD KNOWS BEST;
GOD LOVES ME;
therefore
HIS WAY IS BEST.

LESSON XXV.—JUNE 20, 1875.—SAUL CHOSEN.

SCRIPTURE.— 1 Samuel 10 : 17-24. Commit 17-24; Primary Verse, 19.

17 And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh;

18 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

19 And ye have this day rejected your God who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him he could not be found.

Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"**He gave them their request but sent leanness into their souls.**"—PSALM 106: 15.

TOPIC.—God Exalts the Humble.

HOME READINGS.

M. 1 Sam. 9: 1-14.... ...Saul's Search for Asses.
T. 1 Sam. 9: 15-27.....Finds a Kingdom.
W. 1 Sam. 10: 1-12 .....Saul Anointed King.
Th. 1 Sam. 10: 13-27.....Saul Elected King.
F. 1 Sam. 11: 1-15.....Saul Confirmed as King.
S. 1 Sam. 16: 1-13.....David Anointed King.
S. Luke 23: 1-38.....A Mocked and Crucified King.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

SAUL POINTED OUT.—9: 1-27. Whose son was Saul? 1. What was his appearance? 2. How tall was he? How many feet high? What was he sent to find? 3. Where did he go? 4, 5. What did the servant with him propose? 6. Who was that "man of God"? 14. What was the conversation and what did Saul do? 7-14. Did Samuel know they were coming? 15-17. Who then was it that led the servant to suggest to Saul to go and see Samuel? Does this enable you to see how the Lord may lead *you* also? What did Samuel do to Saul? 18-26. Was Saul prepared for such honor? 21.

SAUL ANOINTED.—10: 1-13. Did Samuel anoint Saul in the presence of his servant? 9: 27. What did he do after he had anointed him? 1. What three things did he tell him would happen that day? 2-6. Did they come to pass? 9-11. Why were they foretold to Saul? 7. The "prophets" that Saul met were not persons who could foresee coming events, but those who were praising God and preaching about him. Saul, therefore, when he joined them—did what? What was it that God gave him? 9. My dear young friends, don't *you* want a new heart?

SAUL CHOSEN.—15-27. Already, but not publicly, chosen. Did any one know of his being chosen besides Samuel? 15, 16. Where did Samuel assemble the people? 17. What great thing had happened there? 7: 5-10. What did Samuel tell them? 18, 19. By what method was Saul chosen? 19-21. In what other case had this been used? Josh. 7: 14-18. "When they sought him he could not be found"—why, do you think, he hid himself? How and where was he found. 22. When the people found out who their king was how did they like him? 24-27. Was Saul in haste to assume his new honors? 26.

SAUL RECOGNIZED.—11: 1-15. How did Saul prove that he was the right person to be king? 1-11. What effect did this victory have upon the Israelites with reference to Saul? 12. Did Saul consent to this? 13. What did the people do at Samuel's suggestion? 14, 15. Had he not been elected before? Why then is it said "they made Saul king"?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

SAUL POINTED OUT.—9: 1-27. *The Man.*—The meaning of Saul is *asked for* or *prayed for*, and may have been given him with reference to the fact that he was the answer to the petition of the Israelites for a king. His genealogy is given with some particularity in the first verse. His father was "a mighty man of power"—of substance rather. He had size and beauty, and the vigor of youth to commend him in an age when pre-eminent physical endowments of themselves induced homage and made the possessor the natural ruler of those about him. Even yet physical perfection is not without great influence. But Saul was not, as is likely to be inferred, a very young man. If, as it seems, but little time elapses before the events narrated in the thirteenth chapter, Saul at this time had a full-grown son. See 13: 2, where Jonathan, his son, is of sufficient maturity to have the command of a thousand men entrusted to him. Saul was "young" as compared with his father, and in the sense that none of the strength and bloom of early manhood had departed from him. This is the picture that we first have of him. The presentation is physical only. What is his character is left to be inferred from the narrative that follows.

His Search.—At the command of his father he goes to find some lost asses. The details of the quest for them are unimportant. His ready compliance shows

that he was filially obedient. The extent of his search (the route of which is now a geographical puzzle) indicates that what he undertook to do he did thoroughly. And the fact that he was afraid that his father would cease caring for the asses, and be anxious about himself and the servant, proves that he was a thoughtful and considerate as well as a dutiful son.

He started out to find his father's asses, but stumbled upon a kingdom. To him it was as though he had stumbled upon it, but *we* can see how the whole thing was ordered and planned of God. The search that, by mere chance apparently, led them into the neighborhood of the man of God, the happy but seemingly fortuitous suggestion of the servant that they should consult him, the objection to going that was overcome by the fact that the servant *happened* to have with him a fourth part of a shekel of silver — all these, as one jots them down, make a sum of chance occurrences, but when they are added up the result shows that each one was a factor in working out God's will. They are to be interpreted in the light of the fact that the day before the Lord had told Samuel that "to-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin; and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel." 16. It is an admirable illustration of that truth, so perplexing in its mere statement, that God can bring what he will to pass without interfering with our conscious volition — that he can fore-ordain without reducing the agents of his will to the condition of irresponsible puppets. Just as admirably, too, do these occurrences show how God can make everything work together for good to them that love him.

His Reception by Samuel.— It is instructive to notice the change in Samuel. He is no longer "displeased" with the idea that he is to be set aside. After the Lord's will has been made known his only anxiety is to carry it out. We can rest assured that in the day that God said that he should send Saul unto him, he was on the look-out for him. He convinced him that he was the prophet which he was esteemed to be by showing, without being questioned, that he knew the object of his quest, and, in the feast that followed, by showing that he expected his coming. 20, 24. He treats God's chosen one with distinguished honor. He made him precede himself to the high-place of sacrifice (19), gave him the chiefest place at the feast, made him eat his own priestly portion of the sacrifice — a portion which he had specially reserved (it was not that which was accidentally "left," as the text seems to imply) for his honored guest, and talked with him with un-prophetic familiarity upon the top of the house. And what was the substance of that talk upon the house-top? It must have been concerning the kingdom about to be established, and Saul's part in it. But, judging from his fidelity to his Master all through this affair, Samuel must have laid before Saul the evil character of the desire of the people for a king, the danger that they would altogether depart from the Lord, and what Saul's duties, as the Lord's chosen, were.

Saul, that day, must have felt highly honored. Hitherto an obscure young man, on an errand the most humble, he was lifted up into intimate companionship with Israel's prophet, was given the chiefest place in the feast, attended by thirty of, probably, the most distinguished persons of the place, and had a vision of royalty opened before him. (What town this was can not be determined. It evidently was not Ramah, Samuel's residence, but was southwest of and not far from Bethlehem.) To Saul this was as incredible as it was to Gideon, when he was chosen for a similar honor. 21. And Benjamin, known always as "Little Benjamin," (Ps. 68: 27); at this time, on account of the punishment it had received for defending the infamous conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeah, was indeed "the smallest of the tribes of Israel." Judg. 20.

The tribe had been nearly blotted out of existence. Nothing apparently could be more improbable than that such a tribe should give a ruler to Israel. To this incredulity Samuel makes no immediate reply. There are enough things to come that shall confirm the prophet's word.

SAUL ANOINTED.—10: 1–13. Previous to this there had been no anointing other than that of the priests. Ex. 28: 41; Lev. 8: 10–12. The oil was poured upon the priest and upon sacred things, to "sanctify" them. By this anointing therefore, Saul was sanctified—set apart for a holy purpose—made a representative of God upon earth. Afterward he was known as God's Anointed. 12: 5. This ceremony was secretly performed, the servant being sent on in advance in order that there might be no witness of it.

All of the preceding facts point to one design. He had been shown that God planned that seemingly aimless journey, the fact that he was to be king had been revealed to him, and now he was anointed by Samuel as God's prophet in order that he might know that he was *selected of God* for his position, and not attribute his coming election to mere chance. He was to know that it was the Lord's hand that picked out the lot, and so was to feel that he was chosen of the Lord, and was to act in his new position for God instead of for himself or the people.

To impress still more upon him the fact that this matter was of divine arrangement, three signs were promised him, the items and fulfillment of which are given in verses 2: 13. Rachel's sepulchre, where he met the two men, is on the road from Bethel to Bethlehem, and near the latter place. Bethel at this time must have been a place of sacrifice, for the three men that he next met were "going up to God" there with animals for sacrifice. It was at Bethel that Abraham and Jacob sacrificed. Gen. 12: 8; 13: 3, 4; 28: 18, 19; 35: 7. The "prophets" whom he met were not men of God gifted with insight into the future. The primary meaning of the word "prophet" has no such signification in it. The word in its root form means *to bubble over*. Prophets were men of God who were so full of his Spirit that they bubbled over with it. They were interpreters of his dealings with men, enthusiastic preachers of divine truth, joyful, praise-singing worshipers. Num. 11: 25. The company of prophets met by Saul was made up of such men, and belonged, probably, to the school of prophets originated by Samuel, and which, in unbroken succession, continued down to the days of Malachi. As was predicted, Saul, when he came among them, began to prophesy also—for God had given him "another heart." A "new heart" is a heart of praise and of thanksgiving. Saul all his life before had been engaged so with earthly things that he had not thought of the goodness and mercy of God. Now his late experience, and the infectious enthusiasm of this company of prophets have filled him, also, with an irresistible impulse to glorify God. Then the people said one to another: "What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul, also, among the prophets?" Thus it was said; very likely with sneering wonder. But the retort was keener than the fling, for some one answered: "But who is *their* father?"—meaning that in no instance could they point to any one of the prophets as being the son of a prophet. The prophetic gift had not with any of them been hereditary, and, therefore, it was no more unlikely that Saul should prophesy than that any of the others should. The question: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" became a proverb expressive of the astonishment felt when any man appeared in a character altogether new to him.

Greatest of all the signs given to Saul of his divine appointment was "the new heart." That was the attesting seal to his commission, and was not only evidence that he was constituted a king, but that he also was a child of God. He was not fit to be a king until he had

become a child of God first. And that is the order of our promotion. "If children then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together" with him. Rom. 8: 17.

SAUL CHOSEN.—The choice was to be made by lot—the mode then followed of ascertaining the will of the Lord. Prov. 16: 33; :8: 18. See lesson on Achan's Sin. The order was: first by tribes; then by families; then by members of the family. Though already in fact selected by God and privately anointed, Saul was now publicly to be pointed out by lot in order that the people might see in the manner most impressive to them that he was God's choice, and in a way that would allow of no charge of favoritism on the part of Samuel; while, at the same time, the consecration and the faith of Saul were to be confirmed by the miraculous result of this process of selection. The people were assembled by Samuel at Mizpeh for this ceremony, that place being chosen, perhaps, because of the fact that there, lately, God had interposed most signally in behalf of the Israelites, and had there broken the power of the Philistines. If they were to renounce a theocracy because of its being, as was averred, ineffectual to protect them, it must be done on the very spot that gave the lie to the averment. 7: 7–11. If they were to have a man-king instead of a God-King, they were to make their choice on the very ground where man had been weak and God only had been strong—where men were ciphers and God the only potency. Certainly the place gave great force to the warning reproach that Samuel uttered to the Israelites before the ceremony began. 18, 19. His assertion: "And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and tribulations," found a truthful echo in their memory of the victory that God had so lately achieved for them there.

When the result was declared, Saul was not to be found. He would have made, at this period of his life, a poor candidate for congress! Already he had shown a modest reticence about what had been revealed to him when questioned by his uncle. 14–16. Now when the foretold grandeur looked him squarely in the face he hid himself from its effulgent gaze. Probably modesty was largely concerned in this concealment—probably, also, the responsibilities and difficulties of his new position, both of which were augmented by their novelty, had to do with them. When he was not to be found the people "enquired of the Lord," through the high-priest, probably, for him. When he was found he answered to the desire of the people. He was taller than any of them, and had a robust beauty that satisfied their sense demands. Kingliness of aspect was what they wanted, and this they had got. They desired to be like "other nations," and here was a king that would over-top all other rulers. Of course they could lustily cry: "God save the king!" Except certain "sons of Belial"—worthless fellows they were deemed in the enthusiasm of that moment. They doubted whether a fair outside made a king, and would send him no presents until they knew of what stuff he was made. Such, at least, is a possible interpretation of the objections made to him.

SAUL RECOGNIZED.—11: 1–15. It seems amusingly odd, after their clamorous appeal for a king, that the accomplishment of their desire did not affect them any more than it did. Each man, the newly elected king among them, goes back, each one to his own home, as though nothing more was to be done about it. The occasion that demands a king finds Saul in the field—a plodding, agricultural monarch—over a yoke of oxen. So little is his new office esteemed that the messengers to Gibeah tell their tidings to the people, and not to Saul. Then "the Spirit of God came upon Saul," and he summoned the people with a message so symbolically impressive that "the fear of the Lord

fell on the people." In their king they found a leader such as they had craved. 8: 20. Then came the battle, and then the victory. Nothing succeeds like success. The heat of their triumph kindles the indignation of the people against those "sons of Belial," who had sneered at the new-created king, though when the insult was given it stirred up no anger. Under the lead of Samuel the people go to Gilgal, and with formal and triumphant ceremonies proclaim Saul to be king. Before he had been king by divine selection — now he was king by voice of the people.

Golden Grain.

1.— God selects no idlers for his purposes. Saul was hunting for asses. Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law. Ex. 3: 1. Joshua we first hear of as the energetic soldier at Rephidim. Ex. 17: 9. Gideon was threshing wheat by a wine-press. Judg. 6: 11. Elisha was plowing behind twelve yoke of oxen. 1 K. 19: 19. Peter and Andrew were fishing when Christ called them to be fishers of men. Matt. 4: 18, 19. See also Matt. 20: 6.

2.— God is an overruling providence, making all things work together for good to those that love him, and causing even the wrath of man to praise him. Rom. 8: 28; 5: 3–5; 2 Cor. 4: 15–17; Heb. 12: 11; Gen. 50: 20; Ex. 9: 16; Ps. 76: 10.

3.— It is those who are faithful in few things that are made ruler over many things. It was Saul's diligent search for asses that found him a kingdom. Matt. 25: 21: John 12: 26; Rom. 8: 17; 2 Cor. 4: 17; 2 Tim. 2: 12; Rev. 3: 21.

4.— A *new heart* was given Saul. What a priceless gift! It was a heart of stone — now it is a heart of flesh; it received blessings, but never gave forth praises — now it is full of thanksgivings. O God, create in *me* a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me! Ps. 51: 10; Ezek. 11: 19; 36: 26; Jer. 31: 33; 24: 7; Rom. 8: 2–4, 7, 8; 2 Cor. 3: 3; Eph. 4: 23.

5.— If we reject God for the world it must be in the face of blessings without number. Ps. 103: 2–5; 107: 8, 9; 116: 12; Is. 63: 7; Jer. 31: 3; 1 Tim. 6: 17; 1 John 4: 10, 19.

RECITATION.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.—*Ps.* 23: 1–6.

BLACKBOARD.

All Things Work Together
FOR GOOD
To them that
LOVE GOD.
Rom. 8: 28.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.— Who Saul was — his appearance — his search — the suggestion of the servant to go to Samuel — their quest for and finding of the prophet.

2.— This Saul was the man whom God had chosen for king in response to the demand of Israelites — Samuel expecting Saul — why — the honors showed to Saul by him — the announcement to Saul that he was to be king — his incredulity — the talk on the house-top.

3.— The secret anointing — the three signs, and how they were fulfilled — the new heart — how he was to be king for God — the election by lot — the hiding of Saul — enthusiasm of the people when they saw him — the fault found by "the children of Belial."

4.— The invasion — Saul's message — the victory — the new enthusiasm for Saul — remade a king by the people — God's children all to be kings.

HYMN.

Now to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be endless blessings paid;
Salvation, glory, joy, remain
For ever on Thy head.

Thou hast redeemed our souls with blood,
Hast set the prisoners free,
Hast made us kings and priests to God,
And we shall reign with thee.

BLACKBOARD.

If Children of God,

THEN HEIRS—

JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST.

LESSONS FOR SECOND QUARTER.

April	4	Israel's Promise,.....	Josh. 24: 14-18	May	23	The Child Samuel,.....	1 Sam. 3: 1-10
"	11	The Promise Broken,...	Judges 2: 11-16	"	30	The Death of Eli,.....	1 Sam. 4: 12-18
"	18	The Call of Gideon,.....	Judges 6: 11-18	June	6	Samuel the Judge,.....	1 Sam. 7: 5-12
"	25	Gideon's Army,.....	Judges 7: 1- 8	"	13	A King Desired,.....	1 Sam. 8: 4- 9
May	2	The Death of Samson,..	Judges 16: 25-31	"	20	Saul Chosen,.....	1 Sam. 10: 17-24
"	9	Ruth and Naomi,.....	Ruth. 1: 16-22	"	27	*Review.*—Samuel's Parting Words,.....	1 Sam. 12: 20-25
"	16	A Praying Mother,.....	1 Sam. 1: 21-28				

LESSON XXVI.—JUNE 27, 1875.—REVIEW.—SAMUEL'S PARTING WORDS.

SCRIPTURE.—1 Samuel 12: 20-25. Commit 20-25; Primary Verse, 24.

20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which can not profit nor deliver; for they are vain.

22 For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

24 Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things he hath done for you."—1 SAM. 12: 24.

TOPIC.—GOD OUR BENEFACTOR.

HOME READINGS.

M.	Josh. 24: 11-18....	Israel's Promise.	Th.	1 Sam. 1: 21-28....	A Praying Mother.
	Judg. 2: 11-16....	The Promise Broken.		1 Sam. 3: 1-10....	The Child Samuel.
T.	Judg. 6: 11-18....	Gideon's Call.	F.	1 Sam. 4: 12-18....	The Death of Eli.
	Judg. 7: 1- 8....	Gideon's Army.		1 Sam. 7: 5-12....	Samuel the Judge.
W.	Judg. 16: 25-31....	Death of Samson.	S.	1 Sam. 8: 4- 9....	A King Desired.
	Ruth 1: 16-22....	Ruth and Naomi.		1 Sam. 10: 17-24....	Saul Chosen.
S.	1 Sam. 12: 1-25....	A Coronation Sermon			
	Heb. 2: 1-18....	A Martyred King.			

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE CORONATION SERMON.—How did Samuel prove that he had been faithful? 1-6. How did he prove that the Lord had been faithful and the people faithless? 7-13. What promise did he make? 14. What warning did he give? 15. What miracle attested his warning? 16-18. What effect did it have on the people? 18, 19. How did he reiterate his warning? 20-25. What do you think are the "vain things" spoken of in verse 21?

GOD VS. BAAL.—For a long time the Israelites kept changing from God to Baal and back again. What promise did they make about serving God in Joshua 24: 14-18? What did Joshua say that he would do? Did they keep their promise? Judg. 2: 11-16. What happened to them when they did not? Who made them live in dens and caves?

6: 1–18. Who was chosen to deliver them? What signs were given him? How large an army did he have? 7: 1–8. How much was it reduced? How many were the enemy?

GOD SUPREME.—What can you tell about the birth, marriage, great feats, the fall, and the death of Samson? What about Naomi? What about Ruth?—her fidelity to Naomi, her gleaning, her meeting with Boaz, her demand of her right and its fulfillment? Who were Elkanah and Hannah? 1 Sam. 1. What did Hannah want? What was there remarkable about her prayer? Did she get what she prayed for? When did Samuel commence serving God? What did he do in the temple? What are the particulars of his call? 1 Sam. 3: 1–10.

GOD VS. A KING.—When the Israelites were defeated at Eben-ezer what did they lose? 1 Sam. 4: 12–18. Why had they taken the ark into battle? What effect did the news have upon Eli? Who was Eli? Afterward at the same place the Philistines came up against the Israelites. How were they rescued? 7: 5–12. What had they been doing? Why did the Israelites desire a king? 8: 4–9. Was God willing they should have one? What did he say about it? Who was chosen king? 10: 17–24. How? Who had chosen him before this? How did he prove himself to be rightly chosen?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The address made by Samuel, as given in the 12th chapter, was made, in all probability, at Gilgal, immediately after the enthusiastic ratification of Saul as king, and, in fact, is a sort of "coronation sermon." In divesting himself of all civil authority and transferring the same to Saul, to whom now it properly belonged, he makes an appeal (1–6) to the people to show wherein, if in anything, he had been corrupt—an appeal few office-holders would care about making. Their answer is prompt and unanimous: "Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." To this endorsement of theirs he calls Saul and God to be witness. The sixth verse is explanatory of the fifth, and is meant to enforce upon the people that one of the witnesses against them is "the Lord that advanced Moses," etc. In giving this testimony for him the people did not realize that they were preparing an accusation against themselves. For if on no occasion they had had reason to find fault with his administration, what justification had they for demanding a change from him to a king? By their own admission they were without excuse.

But he proceeds to convict them still farther. 7–19. He shows how from time to time the Lord has delivered Israel from oppression—how God has been faithful, and they faithless. He shows by the record that they never have needed a king "to go out before them and fight their battles," for he has fought for them as no king ever could have done, and so that this plea of theirs for a ruler was foundationless. And, in impressive conclusion, he calls for a divine attestation to the indictment he had framed against the people. That attestation was given in form of a miraculous rain and thunder-storm at a period of the year when in Palestine thunder and rain are unknown.

The effect of this upon a people already conscience-smitten may be imagined. The gathering clouds were to them dark and fearful with divine wrath, each vivid lightning flash, as it were, laid bare the almighty arm lifted up against them, and each thunder-clap was as the crack of doom. 14–19. No wonder "all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel."

Probably sunshine and calm after clouds and storm never since the deluge were so welcome as they were then to the Israelites. But the relief that they felt, as these physical manifestations of God's displeasure passed away, was nothing as compared with the apprehension that rolled away under the re-assuring words of Samuel. 20–25. But Samuel's comforting words have their warning: "Turn ye not aside, for then should ye go after vain things (idols) which can not profit nor deliver." "If ye shall still do wickedly ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king." And under the terrible exhibition which they had just witnessed, how weighty

and significant were these admonitions! How weak seemed the arm of kingly power upon which they had sought to rely compared to that which had been bared before them in the clouds! That day the people learned that no fealty to any earthly king could absolve them from their allegiance to Jehovah — the King of all kings. But though his supremacy was made manifest in a manner so terrible, yet, after all, their obligation to fidelity to him was put on other grounds than fear. "*For consider*," is the tender appeal of Samuel, "*how great things he hath done for you.*"

REVIEW EXERCISE.

I.— God vs. Baal — Free or Slave.

Scripture.—Ps. 106: 34-48.

Hymn.—"Come thou fount of every blessing."

TITLES.—What lesson is it that proves that he may be a valiant man who threshes wheat by a wine-press for fear of the Midianites? XVI. What one shows that all Israel thought that God had a right to their love and service? XIV. What one shows that they soon forgot it? XV. What one tells of a small army made smaller because it was too large to fight a force much larger than it? XVII.

TEXTS.—What text is that which shows that he is sure to win who fights with God on his side? XVII. What one reminds us that our memory of God's mercies is apt to be a short one? XV. What one proves that we are never forsaken by God? XVI. What one puts God's service above that of every other? XIV.

TOPICS.—What topic teaches us that those who serve sin are the slaves of sin? XV. What one shows that we must be Christians clear through or not at all? XIV. Which one tells us how completely to overcome? XVII. Which one teaches that God does not look in high places when he wants leaders? XVI.

FACTS.—XIV.—What appeal did Joshua make to the people? What pledge did they make? What pledge did *he* make? What were the witnesses? How old was he? What was the result of his appeal? XV.—What ought the people to have done which they did not do? What did they do which they ought not to have done? What were the consequences? What way did God take of delivering them? XVI.—Under the Midianites where were the Israelites forced to live? Why? To whom did God appear? Where? What signs did God give him that he should deliver Israel? XVII.—How many men were in the Midianitish army? How many men had Gideon? Did Gideon have too few? What did God tell him to do with his army? How many cowards were in it? How many lapped water when they drank? How many were left to Gideon? What new sign did God give Gideon? What did Gideon do with his army? How did he get the victory? How many of the Midianites were slain? How many were left?

LESSONS.—XIV.—Did the first lesson teach that God would be satisfied with a portion of our affections? Does he want us to serve him if we do not want to? XV.—How does the second lesson show that it is not safe to enter into a bargain with the devil? Who have the most liberty, those who serve God or those who serve the devil? XVI.—How is it proven in the third lesson that as we sow so shall we reap? that God hears us when we cry? It shows that we must begin to serve the Lord — when? Where? XVII.— How does it appear in the fourth lesson that God can use our weakness better than our strength? How does it show that when he wants to do wonderful things through men he wants men of faith?

II.— God Supreme — Blessed of God.

Scripture.—Matt. 5: 1-16.

Hymn.—"Lord I hear of showers of blessings."

TITLES.—What lesson tells of a woman who left her own people to follow her mother-in-law? XIX. Which one speaks of one who slew in his death more than he had in all his life? XVIII. What one tells of a boy serving in a temple? XXI. Which one is about an answer to a wonderful prayer? XX.

TEXTS.—What text is it that shows that Samson deserved the fate that befell him? XVIII. What one declares a mother's gratitude? XX. What one speaks of a child? XXI. What one tells of a happy choice? XIX.

TOPICS.—What topic proves that people that are now looked down upon may be lifted up to high places? XIX. What one shows that it is best to begin to serve God when a child? XX. What one tells us where Samson was weak and where our strength should be? XVIII. Which one shows that God does not come only to grown people? XXI.

FACTS.—XVIII.—Who foretold Samson's birth? To whom? What animal did he rend? Whom did he marry? How many Philistines did he slay at one time? With what? What great feat did he do at Gaza? Who got him to tell the secret of his strength? What did the Philistines do with him? How did he repay them at last? XIX.— Of what country was Ruth? For whose sake did she leave home? How did she try to support Naomi? Whom did she meet in the harvest-field? Whose wife did she become? What relation does she bear to Christ? XX.—How often did Elkanah go up to Shiloh to sacrifice? Whom did he take with him? How many wives had he? Their names? What did Hannah pray for? What did Eli think was the matter with her? What was it that made her appear so to Eli? Did she obtain her request? What did she do with her boy? Why? XXI.— What did Samuel do about the temple? How did he discharge his duties? What sort of sons did Eli have? Their names? What did they do that was wrong? What did people

REVIEW CHART.

Joshua to Saul—B. C. 1452 to 1120.

LESSONS.			FACTS.				APPLICATION.			
	NO.	TITLE.	WHEN.	WHERE.	WHO.	WHAT.	TOPICS.	TEXTS.	TEACHINGS.	
GOD VS. BAAL.	XIV.	I. P.	1452	Shec——	Josh— Is——	Joshua's address..object of .. people's pledge .. witnesses.	"A whole heart or"—	"The Lord our God will"—	Can't serve God with a divided heart .. serve him willingly or not at all.	FREE OR SLAVE.
	XV.	P. B.	1450	——	Is——	Did not drive out Ca..served Baal and Ash .. sold into slavery..judges.	"No freedom"—	"They soon forgat"—	Make no terms with the devil.. in Christ is liberty .. in sin is bondage.	
	XVI.	C. G.	1270	Oph—	Ang— Gid—	Israel in dens..their cry.. prophet's answer..Gideon's call..the three signs.	"Not many"——	"Lo, I am with"—	As we sow, we reap..God hears our cry .. begin to serve God *now*.	
	XVII.	G. A.	Soon after.	Well of H— Hill of M—	Mid— Gideon's —	32,000—22,000—9,700—more than 135,000 .. the new sign ..the attack..the victory.	"Perfect faith gives"—	"There is no restraint"—	God's strength perfect in our weakness..God wants faith in us to work mightily.	
GOD SUPREME.	XVIII.	S. D.	1170	City of Ga— Temple of D—	Sam— Phil—	Samson's foretold birth .. lion .. marriage .. jawbone of an ass..Gaza..death.	"Strong only"——	"He that walketh"—	Do not play with sin..be diligent in the care of our hearts.	BLESSED OF GOD.
	XIX.	R. N.	1170 to 1160	Mo— Beth—	R— Or— N— B—	Sorrowful family .. humble gleaner..a right claimed.. the right redeemed.	The Lord shall——	"Thy people shall"—	Power of unselfish love..Ruth's bargain the sinner's bargain.	
	XX.	P. M.	S. 3 yrs. old 1170	Shi—	Elk—Pen— Eli Han— Sam—	The yearly sacrifice .. the taunts..Hannah's prayer.. the answer.	"Early c——"	"I have lent"—	Religion is for the whole family ..faith brings peace.	
	XXI.	C. S.	Samuel about 12 years old.	Shi—	E. S.	Two unfaithful priests .. faithful Samuel .. the three calls..the vision.	"God revealed"——	"Whosoever shall not"	God can use a child as well as a man..loved by God..loved by man.	
GOD VS. A KING.	XXII.	D. E.	1150	Shi—	Hoph— Phin— A Run—Eli	The ark as a surety of victory .. lost .. Eli told .. his death.	"The certainty"——	"Chasten thy son"—	Trust in nothing but God .. a child restrained is a child saved.	REBUKED BY GOD.
	XXIII.	S. J.	1140	Miz—	Sam— Is— Philis—	Strange gods put away .. attack of Philis .. Samuel's prayer..thunder..victory.	"Repentant"——	"By the blessing of"—	Put away all that takes the place of God.	
	XXIV.	K. D.	1120	Ram—	Sons of— Sam— Eld—	Samuel's corrupt sons..king asked for..the protest..desire granted.	"God's way"——	"It is better to trust"—	Can't better ourselves by turning from God to the world.	
	XXV.	S. C.	Soon after.	Miz—	Sam— Sau— Is— Bel—	Saul's hunt for asses.. anointed..elected..confirmed.	"God exalts"——	"He gave them their"—	God chooses no idlers..makes all things work together for good to those who love him.	

"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed."

think of Samuel? Who called Samuel one night? Whom did Samuel think it was? How many times was he called? Did God appear to him? What did he tell him? Did he tell Eli immediately? When? What did Eli say? Was Eli a good man? After this it was known all over the land that Samuel was—what?

LESSONS.—XVIII.—Samuel *listened* to Delilah and fell; what should we do when we are tempted? The best time to take a city is when its soldiers are off guard. When does the devil try to get possession of our hearts? XIX.—Ruth made all the people love her—why? Could she have done as much as she did by force? She exchanged her idols for God, her poverty for riches. When a sinner "gives up everything for Christ" what sort of an exchange does he make? XX.—Should only the father and mother be Christians? Who went up with Elkanah to the yearly sacrifice? When Hannah was in trouble she prayed to God? How did she feel after her prayer? What made her happy? XXI.—Can God use a child to accomplish great things? Did he ever? Was Samuel grown up when God used him in the tabernacle and made him a prophet? Samuel was loved by everybody; Hophni and Phinehas were despised. Why was Samuel loved? Why were Hophni and Phinehas hated? If we desire people to love us what sort of persons must we be?

III.—God vs. a King—Rebuked of God.

Scripture.—1 Sam. 12: 1–25.

Hymn.—Coronation.

TITLES.—What lesson tells of an old man killed by a message? XXII. What one of the rejection of God as a ruler? XXIV. Which one shows that God was able both to judge the Israelites and battle for them? XXIII. Which one tells of a man who was looking for asses but found a kingdom? XXV.

TEXTS.—Which text shows that one man may be a blessing to many others? XXIII. What one proves that it is not always best to have our own way? XXV. What one shows that punishment may sometimes be a kindness? XXII. What one shows the folly of Israel in choosing a king? XXIV.

TOPICS.—What topic implies that we do not always know what is best for us? XXIV. What one indicates the way that a sinner may be able to overcome temptations? XXIII. What one declares that the wicked will surely be punished? XXII. What one shows that God does not choose men as we would be apt to do? XXV.

FACTS.—XXII.—When the Israelites were defeated in battle what did they think would surely make them conquer? Were they right? What happened to Eli when he was told of the loss of the ark? XXIII.—What did the people gather at Mizpeh for? What did they do there? Who came up against them? What did the Israelites do? What did Samuel do? What happened then? XXIV.—What kind of sons did Samuel have? Because they were bad, what did the elders ask Samuel to do? Did their request please Samuel? What did the Lord tell Samuel to do? What did he tell the Israelites? Was their petition finally granted? XXV.—Whose son was Saul? What did his father ask him to do? Did he find the asses? Whom did the servant say it would be well to go and see? Was Samuel expecting Saul? What did Samuel do for him? What next day? What three signs did Samuel give Saul? Did they come to pass? How was Saul chosen? Who, then, made Saul king? Where was he when he was declared king? Did he immediately begin to act as a king? When Nahash, the Ammonite, came up against the people of Jabesh-Gilead what did Saul do? Did Saul overcome Nahash? What did the people then want to do with Saul?

LESSONS.—XXII.—The Israelites trusted in the ark. In whom should they have trusted? Are not good works a safe thing for us to trust in? When should Eli have begun to train his sons to be good men? Was he able to control them when they got to be men? Did he restrain them at all when they were boys? Ought he to have done so? Why? XXIII.—The Israelites had been worshiping—what? Was God willing to help them so long as they worshiped idols? Is there anything that we are apt to make an idol out of? What? If we want God's help what must we do with it? XXIV.—The Israelites turned for help from God to a king. Did they do well? Who can and wants to be our best Help? XXV.—What was Saul doing when God chose him? What does God want of idlers? Who, unknown to Saul, arranged his journey for him? Who, when we do not think of it, brings to pass good things for us? Who watches over, and guides and keeps us? Ah, how we ought to love our Guide, our Help, our Heavenly Father, and our Friend!

HYMN.

To Christ I owe my life and breath,
And all the joys I have;
He makes me triumph over death,
And saves me from the grave.

Since from his bounty I receive
Such proofs of love divine,
Had I a thousand hearts to give,
Lord! they should all be thine.

BLACKBOARD.

Fear the Lord and
SERVE HIM,
For CONSIDER how
GREAT THINGS
He hath done for YOU.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Let the primary class, especially if it be a large one, have its review exercise by itself. Let no one suppose that because it is composed of very little ones that a three months' review is undesirable or an impossibility. All the more need is there, because they are young, to take a comprehensive glance backward over the lessons we have been studying—in other words, to re-view them. The Review Exercise will give all the hints that are necessary for the guidance of the teacher. It would be well to make a chart out of their answers on the blackboard. Put down first the initial letters of the lessons and then question them to see how much they can tell about the Title, When, Where, Who, What, Topic, Text, and Teachings of each lesson.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

IF our readers feel a special satisfaction in the plan of the Review Chart this month—and we have no doubt they will—their gratitude for it should be given to Prof. H. Rolph, of St. Charles, Ill. With but slight alterations it is entirely of his conception. While, however, we want to give him due credit for the plan, we do not wish to hold him responsible for the development and application of it. That is our work, and if they are not so good as they might be, the fault is ours. Our last chart found enthusiastic welcome. As this is a better one we expect that this will be still more warmly received. Then a few sent in demanding that it be struck off on separate sheets for general distribution. The publishers responded as soon as they could do so, but this time will be prepared to furnish them promptly to all who desire, at the rate of only fifty cents per hundred. To make a successful Quarterly Review it is necessary that it be preceded by weekly and monthly class reviews. As Prof. Rolph says in a note to us: "Take care of the Sabbaths and the Quarterly Reviews will take care of themselves."

FOR the chronology in the chart we are wholly responsible; and, considering the speculative character of the chronology of the period covered by it, that is a good deal to say! All that we can pledge ourselves to is that, with the present light upon the subject, it is probably not far out of the way. And, what is a remarkable thing in Old Testament chronology, it is consistent with itself and what we have said about it!

SAUL, bent only on finding his father's asses, afterwards found that his hunt for them was the means used by an overruling Providence to make him keep an appointment which God had made for him with Samuel. It was a revelation to Saul that he could go whithersoever his own will led him, and yet, in the end, find that he had but worked out the will of God. Apropos to this is the story of a little boy who was permitted to take hold of the reins when driving a very restive horse. They passed around the boy into the hands of his father. Suddenly, in order to avert a calamity, the father pulled one of the reins. Looking around, with artless simplicity, the child said: "Father, I thought I was driving; but I'm not, am I?"

Men often think that they are shaping a destiny which is really fashioned by a higher hand. They do their own will, but, at the same time, also, they do the will of God. A stronger hand than theirs has hold of the reins, and by means of it many a calamity, otherwise

unavoidable, is escaped. Happy are they who can recognize the presence of this divine, paternal hand holding the reins of destiny, and who can say: "Father, I am not driving, am I?"

WHAT a punster Vincent is! He says: "THE TEACHER HAZOURDeepest sympathy!" Well, well! That man some time or other will choke on puns pointed with such long spiny processes. We implore him to attempt only single words. These poly-vertebrate-puns are too much for human happiness — too spinous for deglutition. They come of attempting to put too much in too little. But that is just like — V-in-cent.

THE *Christian at Work* has been asking some hard questions, whose aim is to show how little is done for the Sabbath-school and how much more might be. We copy them here, acknowledge our inability to answer them, and cry "Next!"

Who ever preaches a course of sermons from the pulpit, on teacher-training, calculated to discipline and instruct the teachers of his church in the work of teaching?

What pastor goes through his school, taking each teacher individually in turn, helping the weak, and training the ignorant?

What pastor holds a regular training-class, to bring up young teachers, and make them really well fitted for their work?

What church keeps up, with system and with efficiency, a normal training-class for the benefit of its Sunday-school teachers?

What superintendent is there, who, on receiving a new teacher, examines him as to his knowledge of the Scriptures, or his ability to impart what knowledge he has?

IN certain quarters there has been a controversy raging as to whether or not mission schools should be started without having some particular church as a sponsor for them. That idea is about as ridiculous as it would be for the United States to snub all frontier outposts except those that are held by men in uniform. Let them be started, of course. They conquer and hold the ground for the coming church. A church as naturally grows out of a mission school as a flower blossoms from the bud. A mission school, if it remains merely a school, does not fulfill its mission. It is a shrub without bud or blossom.

IT may be said, however, in regard to mission-schools and the churches that spring out of them, that they have come to be emphatically the poor man's church. Here he is made welcome, and feels at home. There are no elegantly upholstered pews occupied by daintily dressed ladies and kid-gloved men to force him by contrast to keep away. He sees there only his working acquaintances or the warmest hearted of Christian workers. He listens on Sunday to good, plain preaching, goes to Sabbath-school with his children, attends prayer-meetings and Bible-meetings during the week, and, take it altogether, feels a strong satisfaction and comfort in its unpretending services. It is a question if he is not getting more scriptural knowledge than his wealthier neighbors. And when the mission-school becomes a church he is sure to become a member of it, and if he ever thinks of the grand churches on the avenue, it is with a sigh of relief to think that he does not belong there.

SUCH a fact is a sad indictment on our churches. And yet what shall be done about it? The pride of the poor is greater than the pride of the rich, and it is the poor that can not bear to put their calico and their jeans beside the silks and the broadcloths of the rich. They feel that the rich can afford the comparison, but they can not. And yet all the contrasts in apparel would not keep the poor away from the church on Sunday if they were more intimately and more favorably acquainted with those silks and broadcloths during the week. No one in "vile raiment" feels any strong impulsive sympathy toward those in "goodly apparel" when they see them only on Sunday, and under the restraints of church service. Visitation during the week would help church attendance on Sabbath amazingly, and somehow, the delegation of all the good

will to a lady missionary does not seem materially to help the matter.

We think it probable, in regard to the lesson on "The Death of Eli," in our May number, that many a teacher puzzled his brains without being able to see why "The Charity of Judgment" was an appropriate topic to express its teachings. If it had been printed, "The Certainty of Judgment," as it was written, there would have been no perplexity about it. This explanation saves our reputation, but our proof-reader does not think it helps her's any.

Though we dislike the quarterly alternations from the one Testament to the other in the next year's course of lessons, in some respects, at least, they will be improved. The lessons, as a rule, are lengthened, rendering it less necessary to travel outside of the indicated Scripture to a complete study of their subjects. The most important and appropriate verses of the lesson are selected for "memory verses." Probably the publishers of lessons will content themselves with publishing in full the memory verses only, referring teachers and scholars to their Bibles for the full text. And, lastly, there is no new lesson connected with the Quarterly Review. Schools are given the option of a review or of a lesson selected by themselves. With the Chart and Review Exercise to help them, we can safely predict that the schools who take The Teacher will have no occasion for a selected lesson. "Reviews Made Easy" will be the verdict long before the year goes by.

At the Baptist Sunday School Union at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, J. J. Powell, of that place, delivered an address on "The Sunday School as a Help to the Pulpit." He claimed it to be such because it prepares the scholar for the pew; makes of him a discriminating hearer; prepares his mind to receive the truth, and makes it more effective; and brings the pastor into such intimate relations with his young hearers as, metaphorically, to take off his white choker, and so decreases the formal distance between him and them that there is some hope of his reaching them. While we are inclined to coincide with Mr. Powell, we can hardly reconcile his statements with the prevalent belief that the Sunday-school is the spigot which draws from the church instead of the funnel which fills it.

Some of the most helpful and instructive "notes" that come to this office are from the pen of that much initialed man, Dr. G. D. B. Pepper, in the *Baptist Teacher*. They are "meaty"—to use an expressive term that all will understand. And the editor's page is usually so bright and captivating that we are sorry that he is restricted to so small a space. Can not the A. B. Publication Society give Dr. Henson a little more elbow room?

And that reminds us that in a quiet, modest way our friend, Prof. Edward Olney, has been doing a like good service for the *Herald and Torchlight*, of Detroit. His expositions, though they must be prepared at odd hours, and when pushed with work, are by no means slovenly done. There is a deal of care and thought put into them. There is no hiding his *Torchlight* under a bushel.

Everybody will recollect having seen this amusing item: An Indiana Sunday-school superintendent wrote to a firm of booksellers, saying: "Send some Sunday-school papers and books; let the books be about pirates and Indians as far as possible." The item was a clever invention of some mischief-loving fellow, and it went the rounds of all the press. But just as it had run its legs off, the *Christian at Work* gives it new powers of locomotion by adding to the original joke: "And if the life of Bill Tweed has come out—send that."

And now it is on the rounds again! Oh, Alfred Taylor! how *could* you experiment so on the gullibility of anti-Sunday-school people!

Sunday School Gleanings.

"Intelligent criticism of the Sunday-school," well says the *Independent*, "is to be desired by its friends." But when any one asserts that "Sunday-schools are a failure" or are "a necessary evil," as some have done, why, we are not so dull but what we can see that he means to perpetrate the very broadest of jokes. It's very funny.———This is the testimony of a lady teacher in the *Sunday School Journal:* "There was no duty I so much dreaded, no duty I so much enjoyed in the city as visiting my Sunday-school scholars."———President McCosh is quoted as advocating for all theological seminaries "a simple course of practical lectures on the organization and management of Sunday-schools, and methods of teaching, such as would better fit the future pastors to become teachers of the teachers." As the faculty of Princeton has already in part carried out that idea by securing a lecture from J. Bennet Tyler, and intends more, the utterance quoted from Dr. McCosh is no longer the mere expression of an opinion; it represents a fact. ———The *Morning Watch* is a bright, spicy little monthly, for scholars and teachers, published at Indianapolis. In relation to the teacher who already knows too much to attend the teachers' meeting, it says that Solomon speaks of him in connection with "seven men that can render a reason." That arrow is keenly pointed. Read Prov. 26: 16 and see if it is not.———The *Congregationalist* makes the suggestion that "sometimes a loud bell will help the superintendent in guiding the exercises and preserving order when a faint one will fail." The *Sower and Gospel Field* retorts: "This is unfortunately true; but the school in such a case has a better *bell* than superintendent." The latter paper, we fear, is bell-igerent.——— Daniel Webster never showed his comprehensive grasp of things better than when he said of the Sabbath-school: "As a civil institution it is priceless, and it has done more to preserve our liberties than grave statesmen and armed soldiers." Gen. Harrison, too, had his opinion of it. When advised to get a large watch-dog to keep the boys from stealing his fruit, the sententious old soldier replied: "Better employ a good Sunday-school teacher. A good watch-dog might save the grapes, whilst a good Sunday-school teacher might save both the grapes and the boys."——— At the New Jersey S. S. convention last year Mr. S. L. Garrison said that he taught his children to love in trinities. "1st.—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 2d. —Father, mother, pastor. 3d.—Sunday-school superintendent, Sunday-school teacher, the Sunday-school. 4th.—Public worship, prayer-meeting, experience meeting. 5th.—Benevolent institutions, educational institutions, temperance societies."———A Missouri superintendent is puzzled to find out why his school "run out." He says: "Oh, we run her faithful! We kept her goin' from 9 o'clock until 4, and yet she run out after all. I don't see why it was, for we worked hard and faithful!"———A fact narrated in the *Sunday School World* is unfortunately too illustrative of the ignorance of scholars respecting what is done with their pennies, and why they are called upon to give them. It was therein told that a little boy supposed that his "missionary" contributions went to the support of his teacher! The *Independent* is disposed to think that that, perhaps, accounts for the small

sums given in many classes—the classes giving according to what they think the teachers earn! They rarely mean real benevolence.———At a Sunday-school institute Rev. George A. Peltz was asked: "What would you do with a boy that eats molasses taffy in Sunday-school?" "Ask him for some," was his quick response. Peltz appreciates boy character—as well as molasses taffy. He knows that that boy would never wag his jaws again when *he's* around!

Sunday School Work.

It is expected that Mr. Moody will be home in August next. Meanwhile his friends desire that his church, in this city, shall be finished, so that when he returns he shall find it complete. Thirty thousand dollars are needed for this purpose. We have no idea that a labored appeal will be necessary to induce the money to flow in. We will be glad to see that any sums sent to us for that purpose are properly applied, and due credit given to the donors. His church now has about four hundred members; Sabbath-school numbers about nine hundred.———A Sunday-school superintendent in East Tennessee, being able to get no teachers in any other way, took the novel method of placing the blackboard in the vestibule of the church, just where those going into morning service could not help seeing it, and then put upon it in big, round letters: "A Sunday School Dying for Want of Teachers!" That blackboard lesson was effective. The pastor saw it, and reproved the church, and not the superintendent, and declared that it should remain until the occasion for it had ceased to exist. Volunteers were plenty. ———Our Wisconsin Baptist friends must have had a good time at Milwaukee at their State S. S. Institute. Drs. J. M. Gregory, Warren Randolph, and E. C. Mitchell, and C. R. Blackall, and B. F. Jacobs (without the D. D.) were on hand. There was talent enough there to run an international convention. ———This year, we understand, there were some in Missouri who were not at all hopeful as to the outcome of their coming State Convention. Among them was *not* "Father" Paxson, the veteran Sunday-school missionary. Most youthfully hopeful and determined of them all, he declared: "I don't believe in failure. Napoleon never studied defeat, but success. We *must* make the convention a success." And such it is likely to be———We are really pained to announce the death of the *Sunday School Helper*, published at Pottsville, Pa. It was a bright, cheery monthly, fast coming into something more than local prominence, and we hoped it had a long and useful career before it. According to the doctrine of "survival of the fittest," it ought to have lived.——— Dr. Eggleston has christened his new church: "The Church of Christian Endeavor." That sounds better than, "The Church of the Best Licks," but nevertheless cleverly retains the idea. And a good idea it is, too.———William Lawrence is well known among Chicago Sunday-school men as a most successful Bible-class teacher. Ten years ago he organized the Union Band class of the Second Baptist church, and has been its teacher ever since. It commenced with thirty members, and now has two hundred and fifty-one. Five hundred and two have been converted while members, and twenty-five have died in the faith. The tenth anniversary was a very tender and joyful occasion. We think it was Lawrence who said he "must teach or die." For thirty-five years now he has been teaching so vigorously that death seems to be at a most respectful distance.———Another

semi-centennial superintendent is Mr. John Porter, of Alexandria, Pa., now in his 78th year. There will be a larger number of these white semi-centennial blossoms as the years roll on.———W. H. Robert writes us from Texas that Sunday-schools are there growing in numbers and in favor, and that Sunday-school institutes are now by no means things unknown. That last fact is of itself a commentary on the progress going on there.———Dr. Vincent lives at Plainfield, N. J., about sixty miles out of New York. Vincent has frequent occasion to go to New York. So have several other prominent and earnest Sunday-school men. Hence the formation of a "Railroad Normal Class," so profitable that it will furnish "Analytical and Biblical Notes on the International Lessons," for the *Normal Class.*

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—In the *Presbyterian at Work* we find that a superintendent made use of a novel plan for getting at the impressive thoughts of the lesson. He sent a slip of paper to each teacher with the request to write down the leading thought which he had brought out in teaching his class. Afterwards the slips were collected, and the contents read to the school.

—We are asked to give in this department an installation service for teachers. We suggest the following, to be conducted by the pastor if possible:

Hymn.—"Let the lower lights be burning."

Scripture.—2 Tim. 2: 1-26.

Examination:

Do you desire to undertake, for the glory of God, and the benefit of those who may be confided to your care, the office of Sunday-school teacher?

Answer.—I do.

Do you promise that you will be a faithful and diligent teacher in the Sunday-school of———?

Answer.—I do, God helping me.

Do you further promise that you will persevere in the work of teaching, and that you will not relinquish the office without good and sufficient cause, as in the sight of God?

Answer.—I promise this also, with the help of God.

Covenant:

Having indicated your desire to become a teacher in the Sunday-school, you will now enter into covenant faithfully to discharge the duties you are about to assume:

Believing that the soul is of priceless and immortal value, and that out of Christ it is unsaved and in infinite peril, I will, with God's help, make the salvation of my scholars the one aim of all my teaching, and, until they have accepted Christ as their Saviour, I will earnestly strive with prayer and effort to win them to him.

Believing that after conversion the work of soul-culture is but just begun, I will endeavor, to the best of my ability, so to guide, teach, and encourage those that believe, that they may grow in the grace, knowledge, and love of God.

To secure these results I will strive to maintain abiding union with Christ, seeking the assured aid of the Holy Spirit, and will always preface my work in my class with prayer and preparation.

Knowing that time is short, life uncertain, youth fleeting, and the night coming, I will be with my class regularly and punctually at every session; or if at any time unable to do so, will secure a substitute or seasonably notify the superintendent of my intended absence.

In order to secure the co-operation of my fellow-laborers, assist them, and the better fit myself for the work of teaching, I will attend and sustain the Teachers' Meetings whenever it is possible so to do.

Do you thus covenant?

Reception by fellow teachers:

In consequence of these professions and engagements, we, the teachers (teachers all rise) of this Sunday-school, in the name of Christ, affectionately receive you into our midst and welcome you to your vocation. We proffer you our sympathy and aid in the work you have undertaken, and will watch over you in love so long as you shall remain with us.

Charge:

And now beloved in the Lord, let it be impressed upon your mind that you have entered into solemn obligations from which there is no escape. The responsibility of the faithful training of souls is upon you, and it becomes you to walk worthily

before men and before God, and earnestly and prayerfully to seek the divine guidance that you may be able to speak the word in due season which shall be in the hearts of your scholars as seed that shall spring up into everlasting life. Let your prayers be fervent, your study of the Word of God be faithful, and your labor for the conversion and spiritual up-building of the members of your class be unremitting, remembering that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

Prayer.

Hymn.—"Blest be the tie that binds."

Benediction.

—When Mr. Reynolds was over in Canada, at the convention there, he used several sample methods of teaching as illustrations of "how not to do it." First he took a lesson-paper and proceeded to read its questions. That method was declared to be a nuisance. Then he made the lesson a lesson in geography alone. That mode was voted down. Then he singled out one special person in the class and directed all his questions to him. Exclusiveness was declared to be out of place in a Sunday-school class. Next by clever questioning he obtained apt answers that brought out both the facts and the truths of the lesson, and *that* was voted to be the true method of teaching.

LITERATURE.

THERE are very few thoughtful readers of the Bible who have not been puzzled, and, at times, somewhat exercised over seeming contradictions in the Scriptures, and have found themselves at a loss to reconcile statements in them apparently exactly antagonistic. In these opposite declarations faith can see truths that harmonize, though they seem to differ; but a faltering belief stumbles over them, and skepticism skillfully uses them as weapons of defense and offense. The book prepared by John W. Haley, *An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, is an answer to the oft-felt wish that such apparent contradictions might be placed side by side, and an intelligent attempt be made to reconcile them. Mr. Haley has gathered them together and has produced a very systematic and every way satisfactory work. He treats of The Origin, The Design, and The Results of Discrepancies in Part I.; and in Part II. gives the Doctrinal, Ethical, and Historical Discrepancies. After placing the seemingly inconsistent passages side by side, the author proceeds to state wherein they are consistent, citing the opinions of those who throw any light upon them. His statements are so clearly made, his citations so cogent, and his reasoning so convincing that he rarely fails perfectly to satify the mind. It is a book one wants always within easy reach. Published by Warren F. Draper, Andover.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Four Gospels in One, by Robert Allen Campbell. St. Louis: Henry W. Brand & Co. $1.50.

Types and Emblems, by C. H. Spurgeon. New York: Sheldon & Co. Chicago: W. B. Keen, Cooke & Co. Price $1.25.

Helena's Cloud with the Silver Lining, by the author of "How Majorie Watched," "Posie," etc. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

Queen Louise of Prussia; or, Goodness in a Palace, by Catherine E. Hurst. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

Together; or Life on the Circuit, by Mrs. E. E. Boyd. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

School Life of Ben and Bentie. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

The Shadowy Hand; or, Life Struggles, by Rev. Henry Morgan, Morgan Chapel, Boston. Published and sold by the author.

The Squire of Walton Hall, by Daniel Wise, D.D. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

The Full Envelope, by Rev. Richard Doukersley. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

The King of Day, by Rev. W. S. Urmy. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

Camp Tabor. A Story of Child Life in the Woods, by M. H. N. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

Lucien Guglieri, By Mary B. Lee. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

History of Two Lives, by Mrs. Lucy E. Sanford. New York: National Temperance Society. Chicago: C. R. Blackall.

Chimes of Childhood. Boston: Estes & Laureat. Chicago: W. G. Holmes. Price 75 cents.

The Gospel Singer. For Sunday-schools, by Philip Phillips. Philadelphia: Lee & Walker. Price 35 cents; $30 per hundred.

Echoes from Zion. For the Camp Meeting, Prayer Meeting, Family Circle, etc., by Wm. F. Sherwin. New York: Horace Waters & Son. Price $25 per hundred.

Scholar's Hand-Book on the International Lessons for 1875, by Rev. Edwin W. Rice. Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union.

THE

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LESSON STUDY.

BY THE EDITOR.

WE have refrained, so far, from making any reference to the lessons that we prepare. Now that more than six months of study has made the method of our expositions a familiar fact, we may venture a modest suggestion or two concerning them. It may possibly help the teacher to look for once at the lessons from the same standpoint as their author. We do not mean, however, to give any directions as to the mode of studying them. If they, of themselves, are not a path sufficiently plain, it is no use to put up guideboards along the way to show where the road *ought* to be! Our business is to clear the way—to pioneer a road for the great army that is to follow on after. If we do not do this well and satisfactorily it becomes our first and highest duty to resign and let some one else do it who can.

There is a limit, however, to what we can and ought to do for the teacher. In our expositions we pre-suppose a certain amount of intelligence on his part, a desire to know about the lesson that is strong enough to induce him to take some pains to master it, and that he has a reference Bible, a map of Palestine and—a dictionary. Supposing that the teacher has a reference Bible we do not ourselves give all the references to be found in the margin, but select those that are most important, frequently leaving some that will be found to be valuable. Taking it for granted that he has a map we do not always minutely lay down the geographical location of familiar places mentioned in the lessons. And on the assumption that each one has a dictionary we do not explain words in the text that are a little unfamiliar, except in cases where there is danger of misinterpretation. We can not attempt to reduce the words of Scripture to words of one syllable! We act the part of the host whose duty it is neatly to carve for his guests and give them the solid meat, separated from the bones, but who would insult them by mincing it and attempting to feed them with a spoon.

The first suggestion that we have to offer concerning our lesson expositions is—not to look at them at all until the lesson has been studied as thoroughly as may be without them. One ought never to encourage himself into helplessness by relying on always being carried. We shall miss our aim if, in preparing the lessons, we do not make those who

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study them more and more independent of them by making them more and more familiar with the Bible. A faithful study of each one will, after a while, make any portion of the Scripture an open door leading into an exhaustless treasure house, instead of being a little patch of ground from which, possibly, a few nuggets may be dug out.

The first step in self-help is to find out the prominent topic or moral thought. This can not be discovered on a hasty or careless reading. The Scripture, for this purpose, needs to be read and re-read until one is thoroughly imbued with it. Upon this topic the whole lesson swings. With reference to that one should direct his reading, plan his exposition, and make his blackboard.

The next step is to make an analysis of the lesson — to define clearly its separate parts. When the analysis is made and put on paper then one can proceed intelligently to study the lesson. Each point can be taken up, in its order, until the whole is completely mastered. In this way one knows when he gets to the end of his labor, while, in an un-planned method of study, he never knows when he is through nor whether he has done anything thoroughly. He is like a gardener who cuts down a weed here and a weed there, but does not systematically cut them all down; and so the work that he does never shows. Such topical divisions, too, announced in the class and thoroughly studied there, furnish so many holds to which the memory can cling, while a lesson without such points to seize upon, is a slippery, shapeless, gelatinous affair that will slip through one's fingers in spite of all effort to retain it.

Having the central thought and the analysis of the lesson, next look up all the references, itemizing their information under the several topics of the analysis. Run down the topics through a Concordance and a Bible Dictionary if you have them, making full notes as you go along. *Now* take THE TEACHER and compare results. If its central thought — which is called the "Topic" — or if its analysis is better than yours, then adopt all that is better, and throw the rest away. If yours is best, hold on to it. You at least will find that you have come into possession of some things not given in THE TEACHER, and which you will specially prize because they are thoroughly your own.

While following the foregoing directions, the Home Readings as given in THE TEACHER should be daily read as there indicated. There is no part of the lesson on which we bestow more pains, or which will better repay study than these. The exposition that follows is our work and is fallible, but these are "a commentary wholly Biblical." They are made up either of parallel passages or of selections of Scripture that throw light upon the central thought. Of the exposition itself we will say nothing except that it is better to make notes of those things in it which the teacher desires to use, and then, in going to class to leave THE TEACHER at home. These notes, when finally re-written for class use, should be reduced to mere suggestive catch-words, so that one may never be tempted to read them. They should never be more than jogs to the memory — not a written dissertation on the lesson.

We are at more liberty to speak in regard to those practical thoughts derived from the lesson, which appear under various titles, but are usually called "Winnowed Truths." We do not hesitate to urge their value, for here, again, our work is not so much original as it is that of selection and arrangement. It is intended to make a sort of Bible-reading of each "Winnowed Truth," and, so, present with full gospel force those principles in the lesson which ought to affect the conduct, the heart, and the life. There are, however, too many references in them to be used during the time usually devoted to teaching. Selections from them, therefore, must be made. We spread our table bountifully, so that every one will

have abundance and variety, but, like the keeper of a hotel, we do not expect each one to go through the whole bill-of-fare! It takes some time, too, for the scholars to thumb to the places indicated in the references. Distribute the references, therefore, early in the exercise on little slips of paper, and then each one will have the passage ready when called on. We, also, have made it a frequent practice to cut out the passages from a cheap Bible that we keep for the purpose. These we paste on our "notes" and so have them ready for use.

As the "Winnowed Truths" are put by themselves it may be inferred that it is imperative that they be taught last in order. As they are, however, derived from the incidents of the lesson it is just as well, oftentimes, and, in some cases, more forceful, to bring them up in connection with the facts to which they belong. We furnish the flour, the milk, the yeast, and the salt, each by itself—but you must make the bread!

So much for the practical phases of lesson-study. Since we began writing the lessons we have had a greater personal sympathy for those for whom we have been toiling and a greater anxiety to be of service to them. But specially prominent in our heart has been the desire that the lessons might show little of our own personal idiosyncrasies, but be truly Bible lessons—so that they should not show the personality of the writer, but the very personality of Christ; so that no one would exclaim: "What splendid lessons are 'gotten up' in THE TEACHER!" but: "What a wonderful Bible this is that we are studying!"

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

BY PROF. S. C. BARTLETT.

THE several books of the New Testament appeared as circumstances called for them. The Saviour left no writings. The whole work of organizing and instructing his church he committed to his apostles, promising them the Holy Spirit, the comforter, to "bring all things to their remembrance" and "to guide them into all truth," to teach them "what and how" they should speak, and conferring upon them full power to "bind" and "loose."

The apostles were hard at work some twenty years before they began to make permanent records. They and their helpers taught the gospel orally, as they went from place to place. The first written document that has come down was Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, written about the year 53 A. D., and soon followed by the second. In five years more came another group of letters, to the Corinthians, the Galatians, and the Romans.

About this time—for these dates are all inferential—appeared the first Gospel. Probably the growth of the church and the advancing years of the apostles admonished them of the necessity of permanent records of the Saviour's work. Luke informs us of another reason, namely, the appearance of many imperfect narratives.

The four Gospels probably appeared in the order in which they are arranged. Each of the first three writers is supposed to have been unacquainted with the others' narratives, and the resemblances of the three are now commonly ascribed to the previous long continued reiteration of an "oral gospel."

Early tradition asserts that Matthew wrote his Gospel as he was about to leave his native land of Palestine, perhaps as early as A. D. 58. He sets forth the Saviour prominently as the Messiah and king of Israel. His selection of facts and prophetic quotations bears largely

on this point. He is characterized also by fullness of narrative.

Mark is believed to have written prior to the time when he was described as "sister's son to Barnabas," and not later than the year 62—though some say otherwise, and place it after the death of Peter and Paul. He is supposed to have written at Rome. Early tradition very positively affirms that in his narrative Mark was Peter's interpreter, and this opinion is widely accepted. This Gospel specially exhibits the Saviour as the Son of God, and is marked by peculiar vividness and picturesqueness in its descriptions.

Luke undoubtedly wrote his Gospel before the composition of the Acts, which last work is assigned to the interval between A. D. 63 and 65. The place is matter of dispute. His Gospel is commonly believed to have a somewhat similar relation to Paul, as Mark's to Peter. He was Paul's traveling companion, and is supposed to have been one of "the seventy." He presents the Saviour prominently in his human sympathies as the Son of man. His narrative has been viewed, as more than the others, a Gospel for the Gentiles. It is also marked by a certain completeness and precision of statement.

The first three Gospels were thus all written before the overthrow of Jerusalem. They confine themselves mostly to the transactions in Galilee. They present chiefly the rudimentary and fundamental facts and teachings of Christ's mission, and in a certain sense, belong to the infancy of the church. John's Gospel belongs to its highest maturity.

The apostle John lived to a very great age, spending the latter part of his life at Ephesus, then the capital and business center of Asia Miner. The city was "half Greek and half oriental." Here heathenism was glorious with its famous temple, Judaism was active, Christianity put forth a vigorous life in the heart of the "seven churches," and hither heresy early resorted. It is almost certain that John did not reside in Ephesus till after Paul's death, and that his Gospel was not written till after the destruction of the Jewish state. It is assigned to a date between the years 70 and 85 A. D. A statement has come down from Irenæus, a disciple of John's own disciple, Polycarp, that he wrote at the request of prominent Christians of Asia Minor, in order to supplement the three earlier narratives with a peculiarly "spiritual" Gospel. This request from "fellow disciples and bishops" is affirmed in a still older document (the Canon of Muratori) belonging to the first half of the second century. John's knowledge of the earlier Gospels has been doubted by some intelligent expositors. But there is a growing tendency to concede that though his Gospel was written independently and from his own stand-point, it is yet in some sense supplementary to the others.

This appears both in general and in detail. Thus it is noticeable how small a portion of his treatise covers the same ground as the others. Those who have made computation find that of one hundred parts there are in Mark ninety-three common to the other narratives, in Matthew fifty-eight, in Luke forty-one, but in John only eight. And in those parts that are common to all, as in the feeding of the 5,000 and the last days of the Saviour, it is remarkable what a variety of interesting details are added by John. His statements alone enable us to trace, step by step, the steady growth of that Jewish bitterness which culminated in the crucifixion. Without his statements it would not be apparent that Christ's ministry was some three years in duration. Some writers have supposed that he gives a different account of the time of the Last Supper from that implied by the other evangelists, referring it to the day previous to the regular time of the paschal meal. But this interpretation of John has been abundantly shown to be a mistake, and by none more clearly than by Rev. E. H. Sears, recently, in his "Fourth

Gospel." The last chapter is somewhat commonly recognized as a later appendage by the author; while many judicious persons see in the last two verses of the same chapter a still later testimony attached to it by the apostle's surviving associates. Verse fourth and the last clause of verse third in chapter fifth are shown by the oldest manuscripts to be probably a "gloss," and no part of the original gospel. So also the passage 7:53, 8:11 appears not to have belonged to John's Gospel, though of very early date, and very likely a true account.

While the other narratives present the external events and frame-work of Christ's career, John to a great degree assumes them as known. They deal more with his public ministry, John with what may be called his private ministry. It is the gospel of his person and innermost relationships. It has well been called "the heart of Christ." It discloses him as he revealed himself to the disciple whom he loved. "It abounds in reports of colloquial intercourse, sometimes of intercourse so confidential and sacred that the report of it could not have been made public without manifest indelicacy and impropriety until some of the parties had passed away." It is full of time, place, manner, circumstance, as these were lovingly and indelibly imprinted on the mind and heart of the most receptive of all the apostles. It sets forth in peculiar fullness Christ's relations both to the Father and to the church, his "brethren." It is marked by the "interiorness" of the portraiture and the revelation.

The attempt has been made in modern times to find an antagonism between the portraiture in John and in the other three. But in vain. All the facts, relations, and utterances only constitute one complete picture. There are even individual passages on the other Gospels (e. g. Matt. 11:25–30) so thoroughly John-like that they could not be distinguished from the narrative of John himself. He simply presents more of this side of the Saviour's life and ministry. He gives us precisely their Jesus' and somewhat more. We might almost say that the first three were written for general and missionary purposes, the fourth for a complete unfolding to the "friends" of Christ, and at their express desire, of all the fullness of grace and truth which dwelt in him. It is also thought that some of the statements were shaped with reference to certain errors which had already made their appearance when John wrote. The opening chapter is wonderfully emphatic and direct in asserting the equal, eternal, and distinct God-head of Christ, as well as the perfect reality of his human nature.

This Gospel is remarkable for its seeming simplicity and wonderful depth of its utterances. The language is as transparent as that of childhood. Yet what expositor can tell when he has sounded all the profundity of its meaning? This pregnancy of meaning, while it has been in all times the delight of the humblest of God's children, has also been the chief difficulty of the expositor.

Directness, emphatic reiteration, and loving contemplation run through the narrative; and it also abounds in sententious utterances of great truths which have always lingered on the heart and lips of the church.

Many a writer has not hesitated to fix upon this one narrative as the most remarkable book in the world. Dr. Peabody even ventures to affirm that "the fourth Gospel has had more influence upon the civilized world than any and all other books."

On the other hand, for about fifty years this Gospel, by reason of its very importance, has been made by a certain class of European writers a conspicuous object of assault. They have endeavored to disprove its authorship and to assign it a later origin. It has been well replied that the man who could put forth such a portraiture without a life on which to found it, would have been almost "a greater than Jesus."

But in truth never was a better

authenticated writing. Besides abundant internal correspondences, it has come down authenticated by a line of allusions and quotations from the very life-time of its author, in Christian, apocryphal, and heretical testimonies, till in seventy or eighty years after his death we can find it venerated and used as a long and universally accepted book through the churches in Spain, Italy, Africa, Asia Minor, and Syria. And in one of these testimonials we have the singular fact of that testimony itself directly joining the links of the chain back to John himself. Thus in his old age writes Irenæus of Lyons to his friend and former fellow-pupil, Florinus: "I saw thee in my youth in lower Asia with Polycarp — for I remember the events of those days much better than those of recent occurrence; I can even yet tell the place where the holy Polycarp sat when he discoursed, his entrance and exit, the peculiarities of his mode of life, his bodily figure, the discourses which he addressed to the people; how he told of his familiar intercourse with John and with the rest who had seen the Lord; how he narrated their discourses and what he had heard from them in regard to the Lord about his miracles and doctrines, all of which as Polycarp had received it from those who were eye-witnesses of the word of life, *he narrated in harmony with the Holy Scriptures.*" This same writer furnishes more than eighty citations from John's Gospel, quoting from nearly every chapter. His contemporary, Tertullian, of Carthage, quotes at least seventeen of its chapters, and another contemporary, Clement, of Alexandria, quite as many, including seventeen verses from the first chapter alone.

THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

BY REV. JOHN O. FOSTER.

OF course everybody will turn to THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER to get a correct digest of the late convention at Baltimore. It was voted at Indianapolis to be international hereafter, and by over four hundred delegates putting in their appearance from Europe, Canada, and the United States, it was made so *de facto*. Dr. Millard said the Canadian delegation had not come as invited guests, but by right. And there seemed to be no lack on the part of any one to claim that right, whenever there was a chance to speak, but the president wisely timed the speakers. The topics were well balanced between the work done and the work to be done. Some skillful artist had painted this on canvas above the great platform, showing an open Bible on the left with the words "The Sowing," and to the right a brilliant crown gemmed with the word "Life," with heavier letters near by, "The Reaping," and between the two, a world, with the significant words, "The Field," while just behind the chair, supporting a large cross, were the words, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Dr. P. G. Gillett, the retiring chairman, struck the key note, and was well sustained by President G. A. Peltz, when he said: "The Sunday-schools of this age have taken the hands of the children, and are rapidly breaking down sectarian barriers and making all one. In the name of Him who said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not,' the International Convention lifts up its banners, blest by the prayers of more than a million of those who have sent these workers. During the past year over $60,000 has been spent to recover possession of a lost child, but the convention has for its object the

leading of thousands of Charlie Rosses back to religion, home, and culture."

Then the convention proceeded to business and the close examination of the work done, how it was done, and what were the most successful methods. One man found in Missouri that public efforts and calls for Sunday-school gatherings were failures, so he went to the homes, talked with the people, won their hearts to the cause of truth, and then had delightful gatherings with the children. Another had organized a school, but the second Sunday no children came. The secret was learned that they were ashamed to come barefooted, while he wore shoes. The following Sabbath he appeared barefooted and the school went on. One thought it a fitting opportunity to launch a thunderbolt at Dr. John Hall's new church costing a million, but by and by a response came that those who had planned and built so munificently were some of the best and most self-sacrificing workers in all the land. And the speaker who said, "God bless Dr. John Hall and his efficient church," struck a responsive chord in the vast assembly.

Of the work done, figures would be necessary, and with figures came E. Payson Porter, who produced a huge map of the United States and Canada, all spangled over with golden stars. There were very few in some of the states, but the delegates said that this and that state shall have a great many more stars before the next triennial gathering. Maryland seemed to lead in the record of thorough organization. Every Sunday-school scholar in the state has been registered and furnished with Sunday-school facilities. Money had come readily in answer to the several calls for needed funds, and the treasury was not in debt.

Another prominent feature of the convention was the Normal Class idea. Dr. Vincent was present to advocate its claims, and right well did he set them forth. Canada was well pleased, obtained the floor first, and moved for him a vote of thanks. Some of that delegation of twenty felt amply paid for coming, just to hear the discussion on that one point. But there were so many good things scattered all through the three days that we came away with an intellectual Sunday-school dyspepsia,—not dangerous, however.

There was no great contest over a prominent question like that at Indianapolis, but there was a strong determination to put into practical use the work already projected. The international lessons commenced by this magazine are now used by seventeen confederations, kingdoms, and empires. Some ten or more languages use them, and as one said, "they are helping to unify the nations." We may readily conclude that they are "leaves from the tree of life." These delegates declare that this movement stands first in the advance steps of late years. For a fraction of a cent the gathered lore of all the commentaries may be had on a given lesson.

Dr. John Hall delivered a most powerful address, urging the workers on to new conquests for the Master. His thoughts may be grouped around the themes of love and truth. He mentioned the case of a Sunday-school out west that the teachers and officers had neglected. The children came one Sabbath, but there was no one to lead them. They consulted together and asked the oldest boy to open the school; he hesitated, but finally went to the desk and gave out the only hymn he knew, then they read the lesson; but when the moment came for prayers, what should he do? He hesitated again, but they bowed and he tried to repeat the Lord's prayer. After a sentence or two he choked with emotion, and the children sobbed around him. They taught each other the best they could, sang the same hymn over again, and went home to tell their parents what had been done. The neighborhood was aroused, and vigorous life was put into that worthy school. The children must be taught, and if the present workers are not competent a

new generation will come to the front.

On the floor of that convention were men who once were bitter enemies, but through the truth of God's word they now saw each other as brethren beloved. Massachusetts shook hands with Georgia and South Carolina, and Georgia said through her speaker, "God bless Massachusetts," and South Carolina, through her delegation, invited the convention to meet next time in Charleston. This was the culmination of fraternal expressions, and the applause declared the brotherly feeling to be genuine and general. So the convention was a grand success; every point touched was strengthened, and every noble effort to spread divine truth was commended.

THE WORD.

BY REV. E. L. HURD, D. D.

THE inspiration of the books of the Bible is the inspiration of their authorship. Their authors were guided "into all truth," and had "all things" brought to their "remembrance" by the Spirit of inspiration.

This fact did not destroy nor overshadow the individualities, nor even the idiosyncrasies of those authors; but rather sharpened them into a keener accuracy each in his own line. It is none the less Levi, the publican, who writes Christ's teachings in the first Gospel. It is none the less Simon Peter, whose deepest impressions began with his call by Jesus on the Sea of Galilee — a call marked by a "wonderful work," and who, by the hand of Mark, gave the wonderful *doings* of Jesus during his three years of public ministry. It is none the less Luke, the tender-hearted, the beloved physician, who wrote the Gospel bearing his name.

The Spirit of inspiration, in giving Christ from different views, sought the men adapted to give those views, inspired and guided them. But perhaps no four authors show their individuality in their work more than do the four Evangelists.

The Gospel by John at once stands unique. This Gospel has a very special object quite distinct from the others. JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD, INCARNATE, THE LIFE AND LIGHT OF MEN is what John saw, and was inspired to remember and to show. This, with the striking uniqueness of the book appears in the very introduction, in the manner in which John uses the peculiar appellation The Word, (*Logos.*)

The Word was in the beginning. The Word was with God. The Word was God. The Word was the Creator, without whom nothing was.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt *among us*, full of grace and truth. And of *his* fullness have all we received.

There is nothing like this elsewhere in the Bible. Solomon's personified Wisdom approaches it somewhat, only because that means Divinity personified as wisdom. John alone, of all the Bible writers uses thus this term "*The Word.*" How did he come to use it, and what is its import? After all of study upon this point there will remain enough of mystery and of resulting food for controversy. But there are a few things which a thoughtful Sabbath-school teacher will like to consider.

There was a version of the Old Testament Scriptures which had been translated into the Chaldee, for the Jews, who, during the captivity, had forgotten their native tongue, and which, under the influence of the prevalent Greek literature, was again translated about the time of Christ into the Greek. In this version, wherever in the Hebrew Scriptures it is said "God appeared" the translators into Greek say "the Word of the Lord

appeared." Prof. Stuart says this occurs no less that six hundred times! This was doubtless in deference somewhat to a distinction sharply drawn, especially in the Platonic school, between God as *existing* and God as *developed* and *manifested*. This appears even in the writings of the distinguished Jew Philo, a great admirer of Plato, who wrote, without much doubt, during the life of John. God could only be known by his external manifestation or expressed Word. This was a very prevalent idea when and where John wrote. And this idea became quite in vogue among the early Christian Fathers. Justin Martyr says The Word (*Logos*) anciently appeared, because the Great God could not be manifested to man.

We should also remember that John wrote his Gospel, pretty certainly, at Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia Minor, in the very midst of those prevalent ideas; and that he wrote obviously for Gentile, and especially for Greek speaking readers. We need only in imagination place the beloved apostle at Ephesus, in the last quarter of the first century, to write his Gospel, when the very literature, and philosophy, and discussions of the inquiring were full of the idea of manifestations of God; and when the Scriptural idea in one translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek had taken to itself the expression of the *Logos*, "The Word appearing" — an expression current of manifestation of God in other literature; and when Christians were beginning to think and to speak of the appearance of Christ — the *Logos* — as only an external manifestation, *an appearance*. Then we are prepared to go with John in finding the term adapted to introduce the real "manifestation" — "God manifest in the flesh." "The Word, in the beginning, with God, God, was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." We have not space to dwell upon the import of this appellation, The Word. But if we will in imagination let a word express the mind and heart and will of God; if we will let that word grow until it shall express all of God; until the word in meaning shall become as large as God himself, and shall fully express God, shall be with God, and shall be God; and then let that Word, The Word, begin to clothe himself in our nature, take up our humanity, carry our sicknesses, bear our sins, our temptations, our woes, die on our behalf, rise and ascend triumphantly, and ever live to make intercession for us, we shall begin to see that the meaning of all the words which, in any way, express God to us, are embodied in him whose final name is (Rev. 19: 13)

THE WORD OF GOD.

TINKERING AND OILING.

BY REV. GEORGE A. PELTZ.

A YOUNG man having become proprietor of a small mill, set himself to fill it with all the modern machines which were likely to prove useful. His sagacious old father looked very dubiously at the addition. He thought the matter was overdone, and finally he freed his mind to a friend, saying, "Machinery? yes, he has plenty of machinery. That's where the trouble is; he has so much machinery that it takes all his time to tinker and ile it."

Every sensible person will admit that machinery of any sort is overdone when it is so increased that the whole working force of the establishment is absorbed to keep it in order, leaving no time to secure profit by running it. No shop could stand such a drain. The tinkering and oiling must be the incident, and the vigorous working of things must be the rule. Just here is where the trouble is with many a Sunday-school. The work to be done in the school is the teaching

of God's truth, and the impressing of it upon the heart and life of pupils. It is a narrow view which sees no opportunity for this except as teacher and class work together in the class exercises. The well-conducted session is a teaching and impressing service from first to last. The reading of hymns and of Scripture; the singing, praying, reviewing, blackboarding, map, or other illustration; all, in short, that is done in any session, should work in one direction. Some "tinkering and oiling" may be necessary, but we protest against consuming all the time in these incidental operations.

Some schools make a specialty of singing. They have a good instrument, plenty of singing-books, and a splendid chorister. Aside from what the session naturally demands in the way of singing, this school usually has a concert, or a cantata, or some such matter on hand. To sing well they must practice, and to practice they must have time; and what time is more convenient than when all are assembled at the session of the school? They sing, therefore, before school, and are apt to encroach upon the hour for opening; then, in order that they may "practice" the teacher is cut short of time, reviews are omitted, and at the session's close the singing is tinkered and oiled till all are worried out. So much musical machinery is here employed that the care of it precludes the true work of the school.

Some superintendents make a specialty of general exercises. They have an elaborate system of signals and a burdensome process of opening and of closing, through all of which they must move, regardless of heat, cold, or any other consideration. These exercises are varied somewhat every time the leader attends a convention and gets a new idea. Of course the school must have all explained; then they must be drilled; corrections and additional explanations follow; then they are drilled again, and so God's work is undone and God's Word is untouched while time is squandered in a vain effort to make puppets of pupils. When such training accomplishes its end the school becomes a sort of "wax-works" for the peripatetics who go about to see things. The lesson work is cut short, the review is omitted, and the general exercises are gone through for the gratification of the visitors. This machine takes far too much tinkering and oiling. It does not pay for itself. Set it aside.

Some superintendents are great on geography. They have all the maps of Bible lands, and all of the Holy Land, and all the missionary maps. They have profile maps and outline maps; and, indeed, whatever it is possible to buy, borrow, or make, illustrative of geography. The place and distances for the quarter's lessons are reviewed at the start, and reviewed at the end, plus the geography of the day's lesson. So it goes, week after week, and some folks think the tinkering and oiling here fail to pay.

Some superintendents are giants at a review. They have blackboards, maps, chronological charts, genealogical trees, models of temple, tabernacle, and all implements of service there; they have heathen idols, and stuffed animals, and pictures of all things which do exist or possibly may exist; they have a piece of stone from Hebron, a bottle of water from Jordan, a piece of salt from the Dead Sea, some sand from the Desert, a twig from Gethsemane, and numberless and nameless other essentials for Scriptural exposition. Generally these giants are experts with chalk. One of them gave his whole mind to the matter and actually secured chalk of twenty-seven different colors.

Here is certainly a stupendous preparation for a review exercise. The array of selections as arranged upon the superintendent's desk reminds one of the display of a traveling magician, or an amateur lecturer on chemistry. It is simply bewitching. To introduce the subject, which is "Crossing the Jordan," the vial of water from that river is held up. To give them a distinct understanding of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, a

piece of the wood of a palm-tree is next shown them. Also, a model of the ark, a picture of the priests, and finally a piece of stone from the vicinity of the present Jericho. A few moments are now given the teacher. It may suffice to read over the lesson and touch a point or two; then comes the bell to close, made a little earlier than usual so as to allow time for the review—as if one could review what had not yet been viewed.

But the review begins and proceeds to the nauseating point. Objects are displayed, explained, and passed around. Pictures are produced, commented upon and carried away. Then comes the chalk box and acrostics; alliterations, crosses, crowns, anchors, hearts, and multitudes of similar novelties are constructed and erased until the reviewer is buried in chalk-dust and everybody is tired. The actual time consumed in a session under one of these giant reviewers was as follows: Opening exercises, twenty-seven minutes; class exercises, twenty-two minutes; closing exercises and review, forty minutes! Such a machine is an engine of death. Tinkering and oiling it is far too great a work.

Let us all place clear and sharp before ourselves the true aim of our work. We must teach and impress God's Word. Unless we do this we miss our calling. In passing toward this end let us cling to a beautiful simplicity. Away with everything which does not yield a return of good. Put incidental matters into incidental times. Waste not the precious hours for work in "tinkering and oiling." Have that all done beforehand, and when each session's work is started, let it be to produce results for eternity.—*S. S. Times.*

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XXVII.—JULY 4, 1875.—THE WORD MADE FLESH.

SCRIPTURE.—John 1 : 1-14. Commit 1-5, 10-14; Primary Verse, 12.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
2 The same was in the beginning with God.
3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John.
7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God was manifest in the flesh."—1 Tim. 3: 16.

TOPIC.—THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

HOME READINGS.

M. Micah 5 : 1-15.....From Everlasting.
T. John 8 : 34-59.....Before Abraham Was.
W. John 17 : 1-26.....Before the World Was.
Th. Phil. 2 : 1-13.....Equal with God.
F. Col. 1 : 1-29.....By Him all things Created.
S. Heb. 1 : 1-14..... The Son of God.
S. Rev. 22 : 1-21.....The Alpha and Omega.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE WORD.—When did the Word commence its existence? 1. When was "the beginning"? With whom was the Word then? *Who* was the Word? 1, 14; Phil. 2:5-7. It says in the third verse: "All things were made by him"—who, then, is The Maker of all things? Have you been accustomed so to think of Christ? From whence came life—*your* life? 4. What is God's life in us? 4. Life and light are inseparable. Did you ever know any plant to live where it was perfectly dark?

THE LIGHT.—What else is Christ called beside the Word? 7, 8, 9. As Christ is spoken of as *Light*, what would sin represent? Has that Light ceased to shine? 5. Does it mean that Christ is a light like that of the sun? The sun enables us to see things just as they are. Did you ever, when it was real dark, think you saw things not at all like what they actually were? So one in sin can not see the right and wrong of things. Why? Why can a Christian? Matt. 6:22, 23. What is meant by "darkness" in the fifth verse? What by "comprehended it not"? Who was the witness? 6. What did he come for? 7. What does the true Light do for every one? 9. What does that mean? John was not "*that* light"—was he a "light" at all?

REJECTED.—How was the Light received? 10. By whom was it rejected first? 10. Then by whom? 11. Who were "his own"? Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; Ps. 135:4. What power did he give to those who did receive him? 12. What must we do to become "SONS OF GOD"? 12. *How* must we be born? 13. Ask your teacher what that means.

INCARNATION.—What is meant by "The Word was made flesh"? "Dwelt among us"—among whom? How long? "Beheld his glory"—what glory? How was his glory manifested? How did he show he was "full of grace"? And "full of truth"? Have *you* found out that he is full of grace?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE BOOK.—The Gospel of John was written somewhere near the close of the first century, probably at Ephesus, though that is not absolutely certain. The most casual of readers can not help but notice the difference between this and the other Gospels. This is so much more spiritual, so much broader and more comprehensive that it has well received the title: "The Gospel of gospels." As it is so much more concerned with laying open the deep things of God—the very soul of the Saviour—than with the mere facts of his life, it has also been aptly called "The Heart of Christ." Being written after the others, it was intended evidently to supplement them; so we do not have in it a connected, chronological account of the life and sayings of Christ. Matthew wrote for the Jews, and appealed to them most strongly by representing Christ as the expected Messiah, Law-giver, and King. Mark, writing for the Romans, placed Christ before them as the mighty worker of miracles, the triumphant conqueror. Luke, a Hellenist, writing for the Greeks, himself a physician, speaks of Christ as the great Healer, the sympathizing friend, the tender shepherd. John, writing to all men for all times, expresses his purpose in saying: "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the SON of GOD, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." 20:31. Matthew carries the genealogy of the Saviour back to Abraham. That would be satisfactory to the Jews. Mark carries it back to Adam. That would satisfy the Romans. John says: "In the *beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And *that* answers to the demands of the soul.

The Prologue, that part of the first chapter which is given for our first lesson, and the four following verses, is the counterpart of the first chapter of Genesis. There the natural creation is described—here the moral creation. And this is as much more sublime than that as the moral creation is superior to the natural creation. Every sentence, every word is freighted with meaning. It has heights which never have been reached, depths which never have been sounded. "In the whole range of literature," says Lange, "ancient and modern, there is no passage or chapter that can at all compare with this Prologue. The theme so far transcends the boundaries of time and sense that the ordinary arts of rhetoric and poetry are struck with the silence of adoration and awe."

JOHN.—*History.*—Signification of name is: "*Jehovah is merciful.*" Was son of Zebedee, a fisherman of Galilee, whose home was either at Bethsaida or Capernaum. His mother was Salome, the sister of Mary, mother of the Lord. 19:25. He did not belong to "a poor fishing family" as has been alleged. His father had hired servants (Mark 1:20), and the business of fishing as carried on by him was of sufficient magnitude to require a partnership. Luke 5:10. Salome was one of those who "ministered" to the Saviour "out of their substance," and who purchased the prepared spices and ointment for his embalming. Luke 8:3; 23:55; Mark 16:1. John himself must have been the owner of property. John 19:27. What finally became of John is told only by tradition. It is not likely that he left Palestine so long as Mary lived. Then perhaps it was that he went to Asia, where he had a pastoral supervision over the churches there, was banished to the isle of Patmos, and died at last at a good old age.

Character.—John was not the mild, gentle character which the popular conception makes him out to have been. He was not by nature a child of God, coming easily into His kingdom, and, without effort, adopting all its graces. By nature, on the contrary, he was rugged, abrupt, and energetic, and shared with his brother James the designation of "Son of thunder," given them by Christ himself,—a characterization that probably was given on account of the impetuous temper and fiery zeal manifested in Luke 9:51–55. And yet this is the disciple "whom Jesus loved." As Abraham was "The Friend of God," so John by super-eminence was "The Friend of Jesus." But he did not all at once attain that position. First he was merely one of the disciples whom Jesus had called. Matt. 4:21. Then, more particularly, he was known as one of the twelve. Matt. 10:2. Next he is one of *three.* Matt. 17:1; 26:37; Luke 8:51. Then one of *two.* Luke 22:8. And at last is the *one* who lies on the bosom of Jesus! John 13:23.

THE WORD.—1–4. The key which unlocks the interpretation of this chapter is the purpose of John to establish the Deity of Christ. It is for this that he utters that wonderful climax in the first verse: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was WITH God and the Word WAS God." "In the beginning" 1—not in the "beginning" of the first chapter of Genesis, for that is a definite point of time, the commencement of creation, but this refers to that larger, infinite, measureless period which lay before the creation era. To say that the Word existed "in the beginning" is to assert that there never was a time when it did not exist. And not only here is stress laid on the fact that Christ was 'from everlasting," but he himself dwells with emphasis upon it and so do his apostles. 8:58; 17:5; Phil. 2:6, 7; Heb. 13:8; 1 John 1:1, 2; Rev. 19:11–13. See, also, Micah 5:2. It is dwelt upon so particularly because that fact proves and is necessary to establish the Deity of Christ. If he be the God-Man that he is claimed to be then he must have been "from everlasting"—the Alpha and Omega of all things. *The Word was with God.* That shows that he was an entity in himself. *And the Word was God.* That as clearly exhibits his oneness with the Father. Here we have two persons of the Godhead, in their duality and in their unity, distinctly affirmed. Turning the light of this chapter on the first chapter of Genesis, and how it illuminates its first three verses! In the first verse we have a reference to God the Father; in the second to God the Holy Ghost, and in the third in the affirmation: "And God SAID, Let there be light," we have brought before us the Word, the second person of the Trinity, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Every creative act in the first chapter of Genesis, it will be noticed, is preceded by, "And God SAID, Let," etc. That is confirmatory and explanatory of the third verse of our lesson, which affirms that all things were made by the Word, and

without the Word was not anything made that was made.

And why was Christ called the Word? Because "he bears the same relation to God that words bear to the thoughts." It is through him that we have learned what was passing in the mind of the Father toward us. He brought us the message of redemption. It was he that gave voice to our Father's love. The Word that was spoken to the world was "JESUS"—"for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21.

The first manifestation of the Word, then, was in the act of Creation. And here is the secret of his wonderful love and patience with us. "We are the work of his hands," and "he remembereth that we are but dust." *In him was life.* The flame of our life was kindled at an eternal fire. It does not say that he was life itself, and, therefore, as the Pantheists assert, that all life is but a manifestation of God—that his life is in all things, pervading everything. "*In* him was life"—the principle of life—the vital principle from which all life physical, moral, or spiritual was enkindled.

THE LIGHT.—5–9. Life blazes up into light when it comes to speak of men. *And the life was the light of men.* So is Christ's life now to us. To the realm of nature Christ was life only. To us he is more than life—he is Light also. Not *a* light, but *the* light; as necessary for our spiritual life and revelation as the sun is necessary for all physical life and vision. Light has often been used as a personification of duty. From the tendency to deify it comes sun-worship. As darkness is used to represent ignorance, so light is expressive of knowledge—a perception of divine realities. In darkness we see real things distorted into unrealities so that they become falsehoods. In light we see them as they are—as truths. Darkness represents sin, and light is the synonym for holiness. *And the light shineth.* Still shines. This is not a record of the past. *Comprehended it not.* The usual interpretation to this is that the darkness did not suppress its shining. A few, however, think that it means that the world did not apprehend, or were not aware of the light. That appears to be the more probable rendering. It is the more likely because of the assertion in the tenth verse: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." He was "*the true Light.*" As distinguished from ordinary, cosmical light. As the manna was only a poor type of the true Bread which came down from heaven, so is that which we call light only a faint intimation of the true Light; "and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." *Lighteth every man.* The conscience within us, all moral promptings, all spiritual perceptions of what is right and what is wrong, possessed by all in greater or less degree, are the illuminations and quickenings of that divine Light. No matter in what cave of moral and intellectual gloom one's lot may be cast, there is a sufficient glimmer of this divine effulgence to leave him without excuse if he does not work his way out toward the clear light where the sun of righteousness makes everlasting day.

THE WITNESS.—John was sent to bear witness of that light that all men *through him* (John) might believe. His errand was that of conviction. The statement that he was not that Light himself is indicative that there were some who affirmed that he was, even at so late a period as when John wrote his Gospel, and in spite of the disavowals of John the Baptist himself. 15, 19, 20, 25–27.

REJECTED.—10, 11. *He was in the world*—always. This is a reference to all history. *Knew him not*, or the world would not have prostrated themselves before idols, or worshiped the sun or the moon, or have peopled the earth and air and sea with the gods of mythology, or, in cultivated Athens, have reared an altar "To the unknown God." *Came unto his own.* Not only did the world

reject him, but, alas, ***his own received him not!*** See Matt. 21:33–45. The Jewish people were peculiarly "his own." Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; Ps. 135:4; Is. 41:9. What a world of pathos there is in the thought that he came to "his own," and his own received him not!

THE NEW BIRTH.—12, 13. ***But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.*** Here it is implied at once that men could not of themselves become the sons of God, and that their becoming so was "all of grace." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God *they* are the sons of God. Ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father!" Such power is given to those "who receive him." The black earth can not of itself give forth life, but if it only "receives" the seed what flowers and blooms divine will spring from it! ***Even to them that believe on his name.*** Not to them that believe about Christ, but on his name—not belief concerning him, but *faith in him.* "Which were born—***not of blood.***" By natural descent. Pardon and adoption are not hereditary. Saintliness and godliness do not always travel down a genealogical line. Witness Christ's rebuke to the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matt. 3:9. ***Nor of the will of the flesh.*** Of natural inclination. ***The will of the flesh does not incline that way. Nor of the will of man.*** No one can merely *will* himself into a good man. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good who are accustomed to do evil." Jer. 13:23. The change must be "*of God*"—desired by man but performed by God. See 3:1–8.

THE INCARNATION.—It is in the fourteenth verse that the climax is really reached. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us." By thus putting together the first and fourteenth verses the climax is best shown, and at the same time the purpose of John in writing the Prologue is most plainly exhibited. That was clearly to set forth the fact that the Saviour was none other than the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity made manifest in the likeness of sinful flesh. The term "made flesh" is a happy one. It is the most expressive phrase for veritably becoming a man. Rom. 1:3; 8:3; Phil. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 4:2. It is suggestive of something more than his taking upon himself a human form merely, for that of itself would not imply the assumption of the limitations and disabilities of humanity. But the fact of his being "made flesh" necessarily conveys with it the idea that he took upon himself the weakness, the frailty, the moral infirmities, and the mortality of flesh. It is this expression that gives an interpretation and emphasis to the declaration that he was "in all points tempted like as we are." Heb. 2:14–18; 4:15. ***And dwelt among us.*** Better translation is "*tabernacled among us.*" There is in the expression a comparison to the dwelling of Jehovah in the Tabernacle among his people. Then, however, the Holy of Holies was the innermost court of the tabernacle; here it was centered in a living temple. Then it was inaccessible except once a year by the high-priest, but none were so poor and lowly that they could not secure audience with this Shekinah dwelling in mortal flesh. Heb. 9:8. And "by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh," we still "have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Heb. 10:19, 20. ***Among us. Us*** in the large sense—not merely the few disciples, nor those of Palestine. Christ belonged not to any one locality nor to any one age. He was for all the world and for all time. ***We beheld his glory.*** That, certainly, was not the glory perceptible to outward sight, but to faith-vision. It was the glory not of his miracles, nor of his transfiguration, nor of his resurrection and ascension alone, but that which was manifest through a whole life of outward humility, but of

inward radiance and celestial beauty. *Full of grace and truth.* Ah, how full! How gracious to the lame, the blind, the palsied, the lepers, the sick, to his disciples, to his friends—to his enemies, even, praying for them: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" 16. *And truth.* But what if it had been truth only! What if he had come only to make us see the exactness of the law! What if he had come only to hold up a mirror to us that we might see how unfit we are to enter into the kingdom of heaven! Ah, Truth came to us with a sweeter aspect than that of judge. *It was Grace first and Truth afterwards.* "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The Truth—the great Truth—that Christ came to tell was: "God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

REMARKS.—The lesson affords an opportunity not to be neglected of teaching with special force *The Deity of Christ.* When lapses from faith occur, it is usually because the axe has been laid at the root of belief in the divinity of Christ. Now, then, while the mind of the child is impressible, let the image of Christ as the Son of God be deeply engraved upon it, and no cunning work of after years by skeptic hands will be able to efface it and substitute therefor Christ the Man. It has already been shown that this chapter is a refutation of pantheism. Just as clearly does it silence Sabellianism, which is an assertion that the Trinity is but three different ways in which God makes himself manifest. So, too, does it confute Arianism, which, just the opposite of Sabellianism, claims that Christ is one and separate from the Father, but yet was created by him—a creature whom God had filled with his own fullness, and that, therefore, there was a time when the Son was not. The teachers will see that these old names cover errors that still have a very lively existence.

Points for Arrows.

1.—"In the beginning was the Word"—the Word that was spoken for us. We hold a place in the counsels of eternity. Jer. 1:5; Acts 15:14–18; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4–6, 11, 12; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 13:8.

2.—"All things were made by him." How can we realize the stupendous fact that it was the Creator who died for his creatures—the Omnipotent for the impotent—the Immortal for the mortal—the Immaculate for the polluted! Matt. 20:28; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6–10; Heb. 1:3; 12:1, 2; 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1.

3.—How sin-blinded man must be to make it possible that Christ, the Light, could be in the world and yet its presence not be recognized by the faithful few! Matt. 13:19; John 8:12; Acts 26:17, 18; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 3:2; 6:12; 1 John 5:18–20.

4.—"And the life was the light of men." A Christian life is a new revelation of God. Men who come into that life have, as it were, scales dropped from their eyes. And whereas nature was a mystery before, the newly anointed vision sees God in everything, and he approaches more nearly that Pure Man to whom all creation will be an easily read scroll. John 3:3; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; 5:7, 17; Eph. 4:24, 25; Phil. 3:7–9; Heb. 11:23–27.

HYMN.

Awake, awake the sacred song
To our incarnate Lord!
Let every heart and every tongue
Adore the eternal Word.

That awful Word, that sovereign Power,
By whom the worlds were made—
Oh, happy morn—illustrious hour!—
Was once in flesh arrayed.

BLACKBOARD.

WE BELIEVE AND
ARE SURE
That Thou art that Christ
THE SON
Of the Living God.
—John 6:69.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Right over the chapter that we are now about to study are the words: "The Gospel according to St. John." That means that this Gospel was written by whom? Who was John? (Get the class to tell all they know about him and then supply them with such information as they lack.) What other Gospels were written? By whom? This was written about a hundred years after Christ was born—about seventy years after his death.

2.—Did any one ever see God? Ever talk with him? How do we know anything about him? Christ came and told us. Christ was the son of—whom? God spoke to us through his lips. When we speak there come out of our lips—what? Words. And because God spoke to us through Christ, Jesus is called the WORD. (Put it down on the blackboard.) How long has this Word lived? What is the Word? (Read first verse. Explain "beginning.") All things are made by him.

3.—In a dark night what do you want to show you the way? And in the lantern there is—what? In the dark did you ever imagine a bush to be—a bear? Could you make any such mistake in daylight? Well, the Word was not only Life, but it was Light also. (Read the ninth verse.) Christ shows us the way to heaven. He is a Light for that purpose. Sin makes everything dark—Christ makes everything bright. He makes us see (conscience) what is right and what is wrong. He is our Light. (Write "Light" on the board, and then "Life," explaining the latter.)

4.—Everybody ought to be glad to have Christ come, but they are not. (Read 10, 11.) *Came to the world*—that means to every one—and they did not know him. He came unto "*his own*," and they received him not. (Explain "his own.") Now *you* are specially "his own."—"For of such is the kingdom of heaven," etc., and will *you* turn him away?

5.—The New Birth. The way God helps children to become "Sons of God"—his children. The means he took to help them—came in the flesh. "Tempted in all points like as we are"—so that he knows just how hard it is to be good.

MEMORY VERSE.

Ah, what a Word was said to me
When God spake in mine ear
The name of Jesus—wondrous Word,
That angels love to hear.

Life came he down to give to me,
Though men took his away,
And lest I lose the path to heaven
He lights, himself, the way.

BLACKBOARD.

JESUS IS GOD'S WORD

Of Love to us.

OUR LIFE—OUR LIGHT,

OUR SAVIOUR.

LESSON XXVIII.—JULY 11, 1875.—FOLLOWING THE LAMB.

SCRIPTURE.—John 1: 35-46. Commit 40-46; Primary Verse, 36.

35 Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.
42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.
43 The day following Jesus would go forth unto Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.
44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.
45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.
46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."—Rev. 14:4.

TOPIC.—"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near."—Is. 55:6.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Mal.**	**3 and 4.... ...The "Elias" that was to come.**
T.	**Is.**	**40:1-31.....The Voice" crying in the Wilderness.**
W.	**Is.**	**53:1-12 .....The Unresisting Lamb of God.**
Th.	**Ex.**	**12:1-27.....The Lamb prefigured in Passover.**
F.	**Num.**	**28:1-21.....The Lamb prefigured in Sacrifice.**
S.	**1 Pet.**	**1:1-25.....The Lamb without Blemish.**
S.	**Rev.**	**5:1-14.....Worthy, Worthy is the Lamb.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

JOHN'S WITNESS.—What "witness" had John borne for Christ in verses 15-18? What in verses 19-28? What in 29-31? In 32-34? In 35, 36? What way did the rulers take to find out who John was? 19. Which John is this? What question did they ask? What was his answer? 20. What was their next question? 21. What was his reply to that? Though he was not actually Elias (Elijah) read Luke 1:17; Matt. 11:14; 17:10-12 and see if you can tell in what way might he answer to the prophecy in Mal. 3:1; 4:5. What "prophet" is referred to in verse 21? Matt. 16:14. What does John finally say he is? 23. What was he to do? 26. Who is referred to in verse 27? What does John call Christ in verse 23? In verse 29? In verse 34? What can you tell about Christ's baptism? Matt. 3:13-17.

CALL OF ANDREW AND JOHN.—How came these two disciples to follow Jesus? 35, 36. Of whom had they been disciples before? How do we know that "the two disciples" were Andrew and John? 40. Verse 40 tells that one was Andrew, and as it is John himself that writes the account, he would have told who the other was had it been any body *but* himself. When they followed Jesus who spoke first? 38. Is not Christ ever ready first to speak? What is their reply? What do they call him? What does that mean? What did they want to learn of Christ do you suppose? Why did they want to go home with him? What does Christ bid them do? What does he bid *you* do? What time of day was "the tenth hour"?

CALL OF PETER.—Who induced Peter to go to Christ? 40, 41. What did he tell him? 41. What is the meaning of Messiah? Of Christ? What did Jesus say when he saw him? 42. What is the meaning of Cephas? Of Peter? What was his name up to this time? What do you think Christ meant by saying that his name should henceforth be Cephas, or Peter?

CALL OF PHILIP AND NATHANAEL.—Who found Philip? Who, Nathanael? What did Philip say to Nathanael? What was Nathanael's reply? Do you suppose, then, that Nazareth could be a good place? What did Jesus say of Nathanael? 47. What power was it that enabled him to say that? What other exhibition of that power did Jesus give? 48. What effect did it have upon Nathanael? 49. What greater things did Jesus promise? 50, 51.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Geographical.

GALILEE (*a circle*).—In the Old Testament, Galilee originally designated a small circuit around Kedesh-Naphtali in which were the twenty towns given by Solomon to Hiram, king of Tyre. Josh. 20:7; 1 K. 9:11. The territory became subsequently much enlarged, and, in the time of our Saviour was the northernmost of the three parts into which the Holy Land was divided. It occupied the ancient territory of Zebulon, Issachar, and Naphtali, with the Northern settlement of Dan, and, at one time included a part of Asher. Its boundaries were from the Mediterranean to the Jordan valley; from Mt. Carmel to Phœnicia and the Lebanon range. With respect to its topography and climate, Galilee has been aptly termed "The

New England of the Holy Land." At one time it was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee; the first being called, with reference to the mixed races that from a very early period inhabited it, "the Galilee of the Gentiles." As might be supposed, the intermingling of the different peoples in this territory did very much to enfranchise them from the rigid formalism that prevailed as one approached Jerusalem. On account of its greater freedom from the superstitious despotisms and inflexible dogmas of Judea, it was far better prepared for the reception of the Saviour, and it enjoyed the greater portion of his ministry. Indeed, the majority of the incidents narrated in the first three Gospels, up to the time of the passion, are located in Galilee. The Gospel of John, however, mainly dwells upon what took place in Judea. Its mixture of races was the cause of its being held much in contempt by the ruling classes of the metropolis who prided themselves on the length and purity of their pedigree, and gave it, also, the rough, unpolished dialect which betrayed the apostleship of Peter.

BETHSAIDA (*House of fish*).—The indications are that there were two Bethsaidas, one near Capernaum on the west of the lake; the other in Gaulonitis, east of it. The latter was, probably, a mere fishing hamlet.

NAZARETH.—A place utterly unknown except from its inhabitation by Joseph and Mary on their return from Egypt. A small village, possibly of no good repute. See verse 46. It is situated in a beautiful valley five miles west of Tabor. Its inhabitants having beheld the boyhood of Jesus were indisposed to accept him as the Messiah. It was unto them that the proverb was quoted: "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country." On the occasion when this proverb was quoted the people of Nazareth were so enraged that they would have thrown him from a precipice. But he, "passing through their midst," went unto Capernaum, which, henceforward, was "his own city"! The town is now called *en-Nazirek*, and has about 3,000 inhabitants.

Biographical.

ANDREW (*manly*).—Son of Jonas, and as the text says, brother of Peter, though whether older or younger is not known. By trade a fisherman, and lived at Bethsaida. Is only three times specially mentioned in the Gospels; first, in connection with the miracle of the loaves and fishes (John 6: 8, 9); second, in relation to the request of the Greeks at the passover to see Jesus (John 12: 22); and, third, in regard to his question about the destruction of Jerusalem. Mark 13: 3. Tradition says that he preached in Scythia, Asia Minor, Greece, and was crucified at Achaia on a cross in the form of the letter X—a cross which, on that account, is called St. Andrew's Cross.

PETER (*rock*).—Original name was Simon. Changed by the Saviour, as the lesson says, to Cephas, which is the Aramaic form of Peter. The character of no other apostle is so well known as that of Peter. His impulsive fickleness, his real devotion, and his zeal are thoroughly well known. He was pre-eminently the talker of the little band of disciples, and, after the ascension, was the revivalist preacher,—three thousand being converted by his Pentecostal sermon, and still more on subsequent occasions. Acts 2: 14–41; 4: 4. He was the one deputized in vision to open the gospel to the Gentiles. Acts 10: 1–41. Afterwards he consistently and nobly stood up for their freedom from the ceremonial observance of the Jews, which to them would have been as a yoke of bondage. Acts 15: 1–31. But this manly protest of his is dimmed by his action at Antioch as referred to in Gal. 2: 11–14. The two incidents show that he had not yet become entirely stable in character. From 1 Cor. 9: 5 we have a hint that after the apostles separated he went about as a missionary with his wife. For all else respecting him we are dependent upon tradition. According to

that he was martyred in Rome under Nero, with his head downward, in accordance with the prediction of his violent death in John 21:18, 19. The Catholics very strongly affirm the truth of this story, and declare that his bones rest directly under the dome of St. Peters.

PHILIP.—Also a resident of Bethsaida. Little is known of him. The special references to him may be found in 6:5–7; 12:20–22; 14:8. Is said to have preached in Phrygia, and met his death in Hierapolis.

NATHANAEL (*given of God*).—Undoubtedly the one spoken of elsewhere as Bartholomew; the latter name simply meaning, "the son of Tolmai." Tradition says that he preached in India, was flayed alive and crucified, head downwards.

Exegetical.

JOHN'S WITNESS.—The events of the lesson are the result of the testimony borne by John. There was, first, the general testimony, mentioned in verses 15–18; second, the specific testimony to the rulers given in verses 19–28; third, the equally specific witness twice borne before his disciples, and, in the first instance, perhaps before the multitude also: "Behold the Lamb of God!" It will be seen that in his testimony before the rulers John seems to be in no ignorance respecting the person of Christ. In verses 31, 33, however, he declares: "And I knew him not." There is, therefore, good reason for supposing that the baptism of Christ preceded his evidence before the Sanhedrin, the declaration, "And I knew him not," meaning only that previous to his baptism John did not inspirationally know that Christ was the promised Saviour.

The deputation sent down to question John represented those who had official authority to enquire into his prophetical claims. They came, it may be inferred, somewhat predisposed in his favor. In the first place the coming of the Messiah had been a long-looked-for event. In the second place, the baptism of John was an assertion of national as well as individual uncleanness, and it was known that the Messianic kingdom was to be ushered in with this rite. Ezek. 36:25; 37:23; Zech. 13:1. From Mal. 4:5 they looked for the re-coming of the literal Elijah, and expected that he would be preceded or succeeded by a prophet, and that prophet probably Jeremiah. Matt. 16:14. Now, then, if John would answer Yes to either of the questions as to whether he were Christ or Elias, or "that prophet," they were prepared to look upon him with favor, if not entirely to endorse him. But he could answer no one of them with an unqualified affirmation. He was not the Christ; he was not the literal Elias; nor was he the prophet. He was the Elijah predicted, for he came "in the spirit and power of Elijah," but he could not so say without involving himself in profitless exegetical controversy on the meaning of the prophetic passage concerning his coming.

Mark, now, the temptation to which John was subjected. *Art thou the Christ?* Already the popular opinion was inclined so to declare him. Luke 3:15. What if he should by a word change this evanescent impression into a permanent belief! Were there no visions, think you, of greatness and homage that came before him when these representatives of power virtually asked him to declare himself the Christ? *And he confessed and denied not.* Is there not a hint in those words of the struggle that had been going on within? *He confessed "I am not the Christ"*—as though the words had come hesitatingly and guiltily from his lips, halting and crippled from off that inward battlefield. If the text had said: *"And he declared that he was not the Christ"* we should have no intimation of any internal conflict whatever. *Art thou Elias?* If he were not the Christ, the ambassadors were still prepared to do him honor as the real Elijah. To have assented to their question, and so met the popular expectation of Elijah returned to earth, would

have been to have occupied still a deified place in popular estimation. To explain that he was Elijah only in the sense in which the name might properly be applied to him, and to deny that he was "that prophet" was to come down step by step from the elevation whereon the people and the rulers were inclined to place him, and to step off into the lowest depths of humility. After the first temptation he does not hesitate, and, at last, when asked who he was, declares: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." There he touched bottom! —was willing to be nothing only a Voice that the way of the Lord should be made straight. He refers in this declaration to that prophecy in Isaiah 40: 3 which had not before been recognized as a Messianic prediction. He tells his questioners that he baptizes only with water, but the One standing among them whom they know not is the one whom he afterward declares is to baptize with the Holy Ghost. "They ever ask John about his person; he ever refers them to his office."

If it be correct to put the baptism of Jesus before the testimony of John to the rulers, of which there seems to be no doubt, then the temptations of John and the temptations of Christ in the wilderness were not only the same in number, but must have been nearly if not quite contemporaneous. What a desperate assault the devil made on the beginning of the new dispensation which had in it hope for sinful man!

It is well to note the three-fold way in which John in his "witness" speaks of Christ. First, he is the Lord. 23. Next the Lamb. 29. Third, the Son. 34. The designation of Christ as "the Lamb of God," thus early in his career is significant. Undoubtedly John had special reference to Isaiah 53: 7. He saw in this supremely gentle being the one "brought as a lamb to the slaughter." He saw in him also the lamb of which the passover lamb had been for ages the type. 1 Cor. 5: 7. To John's prophetic vision was revealed the fact that this Saviour of the world was not to be glorified with outward triumph, as was expected, but was to save others by the sacrifice of himself. And so there is a world of reverential pity in the exclamation: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world!"

CALL OF ANDREW AND JOHN.—Only Andrew is mentioned (40), and because of the fact that John so often is studiously silent concerning himself, it is inferred that the one not mentioned must be himself. See 13: 23; 18: 15; 19: 26; 20: 3; 21: 20. *The next day*—the day after the testimony of John before the Sanhedrin. All these days are so precious in John's memory that he counts them one by one. *Behold the Lamb of God.* This was not the first time those two disciples had heard this. 29. Now again their attention was turned by the repetition of that remarkable declaration. Hitherto they had been disciples of John. Now he illustrated the office of every true teacher by turning their eyes from himself to Christ. It was his mission to see that they became Christ's disciples, not his.

"The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus." *How soon!* No hesitation, no waiting to know more —they followed him in order that they might know more. *What seek ye?* How graciously Christ meets them! He who, they have lately learned, is the Son of God, is the first to speak. They, the sinful, seeking the Sinless, and he the first to make advances. To them the story of the Prodigal Son, when it came, was but the illustration of this fact of their experience. They *knew* that God was more than ready to meet the sinner half-way. The two are embarrassed. They seek himself, or, rather, God, which they have been told dwells in that tabernacle of flesh, but confused, they stammer out: "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" They can not frame the questions of their hearts except they be alone with him. When one is once earnestly aroused and desirous to settle

these questions of the soul, it is the natural instinct of the heart to be "alone with Jesus." *Come and see.* As this Searcher of hearts knew that their quest was to find out about himself, his invitation means something more than merely to come and see where he dwelt. It also meant Come and satisfy your doubts and see whether I be the Christ or no. If any one doubts the divinity of the Saviour—and a good many are asking of him: "Where dwellest thou?"—his answer is "Come and see." Experience is the best proof. The most exact demonstration of science, if that were possible, would never satisfy the heart. We should still be skeptical unless that cried out: "My Lord! my God!" "Human things," says Pascal, "must be known to be loved, but divine things must be loved to be known."

What took place when "they abode with him" is not told, but it was such a memorable hour that John never forgot it. He was able over sixty years afterward to say, "*it was about the tenth hour.*" It was the hour of his conversion. By Jewish time, reckoning from sunrise, that would be four o'clock in the afternoon.

THE CALL OF PETER.—Andrew *first* findeth his own brother. We should infer from that that John as well as Andrew was seeking his brother, and the latter was the first to succeed in his search. From the intensity of the narrative it is easy to infer that this was on the evening of the same day. With the zeal of new converts they hasten to tell their own brothers: "*We have found the Messiah*"!—an announcement the joy of which is to be interpreted only "by the forty centuries of its expectancy." Brother leading brother, friend leading friend; that is the appointed way until there shall be no need to teach every man his neighbor, or every man his brother, for all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. *Messiah;* Hebrew, meaning *anointed.* Greek form is *Christ.* When and with what anointed? 31–33.

Thou shalt be called Cephas. Divine perception of character. The new name was expressive of his future service. So the lapidarian takes up a worthless looking stone and says: This is a diamond. Its foul incrustation hides its worth from common eyes. It is a grand thought that Jesus sees in us not only what we are, but what we may become. And when we shall have come into the perfect character which he sees is possible for us and before us, then will he give to *us* also "a new name." Rev. 2:17; 3:12.

CALL OF PHILIP AND NATHANAEL.—All that we know of the call of Philip is that recorded in verse 43. "Jesus findeth him." Then Philip, illustrating again the way of propagating the gospel, "findeth Nathanael." *Of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write.* Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:15; Is. 9:6; Is. 7:14; Jer. 23:5; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24, 25. *Can any good thing?* etc. Frank astonishment—astonishment, it seems to us, that so great a good should come out of so small and insignificant a place rather than that *any* good thing should come out of it. *Behold an Israelite.* Not a Jew, but a spiritual descendant of him who prevailed with God and was named Israel. Gen. 32:28. Under the fig-tree he may have been engaged in a like wrestling. *No guile*—no deceit. Was truthful but nevertheless sinful. "In whom is no guile" was spoken of one who had just declared his incredulity in Jesus as the Messiah. *Whence knowest thou me?* This knowledge of the heart astonishes Nathanael. *It is Christ's knowledge of the heart and his supply of its needs that more than anything else is the basis of our faith in Christ.* When one comes around who understands a watch he it is to whom we give it for repair. Nathanael does not yet call Christ "Rabbi." When Jesus says: "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee," *then* his adoration finds expression in the triple characterization: *Rabbi, Son of God, King of Israel,*—the latter being specially acknowledgment that Jesus was ruler over *his* heart.

The chapter closes with a promise that

"greater things than these" shall his disciples see. The particulars of the promise as given in verse 51 are evidently suggested by the vision vouchsafed to that first Israelite in his dream at Bethel. Gen. 28:12. It is a prediction of an "*open heaven*"—of unrestricted and restored intercourse between heaven and earth. But whereas Jacob's vision was a vanishing dream, this was to be an abiding reality. The Son of man was to take the place of the ladder and so bring heaven down to earth and earth up to heaven. It is not a picture of the future advent, for the disciples were "*henceforth*" to behold it—as they did in the angelic appearances they saw, on the mount of transfiguration, in the working of miracles, and, more especially, in the constant personal intercourse between the Father and the Son.

The title "Son of man," so often used by Christ himself, *was never applied to him by others except in three instances.* Acts 7:56; Rev. 1:13; 14:14. It was Jesus himself who so constantly held up his humanity so that men might feel that they were of kin, and not be kept away by the dazzling brightness of his divinity. His disciples, as it became them, in speaking of him always recognized him as the Lord, but he came down to the level of our humanity and called himself "our Elder Brother"! The phrase is used in Daniel 7:13 in a Messianic prophecy, but had never been current coin among the interpreters of the law, because they were looking for titles more regal.

Points for Arrows.

1.—How much meaning there is to us in the phrase "the Lamb of God." When on account of our sins we might have looked for a lion, God sends a Lamb. He came not to destroy us for our sins, but to "take those sins away." Luke 9:56; John 3:17; 8:11; 12:47; 1 John 3:5; Rev. 5:6, 9; 7:9, 10, 14.

2.—How quickly the two disciples followed Christ when he was pointed out. "To-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts. Prov. 1. 24–28; Is. 55:6; Luke 13:24, 25; 19:42; John 12:35; Heb. 3:7, 8.

3.—To all honest doubters the invitation is: Come and see. God will be found of those who earnestly seek him. Prov. 8:17; Is. 1:18; 43:26; Matt. 7:7, 8; Jas. 1:5, 6.

4.—It is the instinct of every new convert to tell to all his friends "what great things the Lord hath done" for him. It is the way that the gospel is to be spread. Alas, if we lose the new convert's zeal! Ps. 66:6; Mark 5:19; Acts 10:24; 16:31–33; 1 John 4:21; Matt. 24:12.

5.—To those who put their faith in God there is ample heart-evidence that Christ is divine, for he "hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying Abba, Father." Rom. 8:9, 14–16; 2 Cor. 1:22; 4:6; Gal. 4:3–6; 1 John 4:13; 5:10.

HYMN.

Just as I am—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee;
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee whose blood can cleanse each spot
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

BLACKBOARD.

BEHOLD THE
Gentle, Patient, Suffering
LAMB OF GOD,
Sacrificed for your Sake.
FOLLOW YE HIM.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Before Jesus began to go about preaching and doing good, there was a man in the wilderness (explain "wilderness") who was dressed in camel's hair,

and who ate locusts and wild honey, who went about crying: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord!" He did this so that the people would be ready to receive Christ when he should make himself known. He told every body to repent because the Messiah was coming. The one who did this was called John the Baptist because he baptized those who were sorry for their sins in the river Jordan. One day when he was baptizing the Messiah came, and desired to be baptized of him. (Tell all the incidents of the baptism.)

2.—When he saw him what do you think John called Jesus? It was a most beautiful name that he gave him. He called him "The Lamb of God." Why did he call Jesus a Lamb? (Draw out: Because he was "loving," "gentle," "innocent," etc., and then tell about him as the sacrificial lamb that "taketh away the sins of the world"—the passover lamb, whose blood saves us—and then tell how his being so called showed that he came to the world to die. Read Is. 53: 7 and make its meaning plain.)

3.—Call of Andrew and John—how they came to follow Christ. Christ's gracious question—his gracious invitation—just such as he gives now. They went with him. John never forgot that hour—it was about "the tenth hour." Andrew and John want others to know this Christ—seek their own brothers—Andrew findeth his first. What Christ said to Peter. Why? Understands the heart—*our* hearts as well.

4.—Philip found by Christ—Nathanael found by Philip. That is the way little ones should do—tell about Christ. What Christ knew about Nathanael before he saw him. What he told him—what Nathanael said. Knows all about us—our *names*, places where we live, what we do, the hairs of our head all numbered. Why does he know all about us? Because he loves us. He knows all about us so that he can help us to be Christians.

MEMORY VERSE.

Hark the voice of Jesus calling
Follow me! Follow me!
Softly through the silence falling
Follow me! Follow me!

As of old he call the fishers
When he walked by Galilee,
Still his patient voice is pleading
Follow me! Follow me!

BLACKBOARD.

Follow JESUS, the
LOVING
LAMB OF GOD.

LESSON XXIX.—JULY 18, 1875.—JESUS AT THE MARRIAGE.

SCRIPTURE.—John 2: 1-11. Commit 8-10; Primary Verse, 5.

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:
2 And both Jesus was called and his disciples, to the marriage.
3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said, they have no wine.
4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.
5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.
6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.
7 Jesus said unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.
8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.
9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,
10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.
11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."— JOHN 2: 11.

TOPIC.—JOY FOR MOURNING.

HOME READINGS.

M. John 9: 1-41.....Sight for the Blind.
T. Mark 1: 40-45.....Restoration for the Lepers.
W. John 5: 1-16..... Strength for the Impotent.
Th. Luke 5: 17-26.....Power for the Palsied.
F. Luke 7: 11-16.....Life for the Dead.
S. John 8: 1-11.....Pardon for the Sinner.
S. 1 Cor. 15: 35-58.....Incorruption for the Corruptible.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE MARRIAGE.—Where was it? 1. When did it take place? Third day from what? 1:43. Who were there? 1, 2, 12. How many disciples? 1:37, 41, 43, 45. How many days did marriage feasts usually last? Judg. 14: 12.

THE LACK.—What was it they wanted? 3. What is meant by "wanted wine"? Who told Jesus this? As the bridegroom was always particular to get a sufficient supply before the guests came, how is it, do you think, that in this case the supply ran out? Why did the mother of Jesus tell *him*, "They have no wine"? Do you think she expected he would do anything to remedy the matter? What? Had he ever worked a miracle before this? 11.

THE REBUKE.—What did Jesus answer? 4. What did he call her? Was that disrespectful? What did he say to her on the cross? 19:26. What did he call her then? Was *that* disrespectful? What does he mean by asking her: "What have I to do with thee?" He was the Son of Mary, but of whom else was he the Son? Which one, then, should look upon the other as the superior? Why? Did he ever say anything like this on other occasions? Matt. 12:49, 50; Luke 8:19-21. What does he mean by "mine hour is not yet come"? When we want him to do anything does he always think is best to do it right off? But his time is always best nevertheless. What does Mary tell the servants to do? 5. Why did she say that? Had she taken his rebuke as a refusal to do anything?

THE MIRACLE.—What was the miracle? 7-9. In what was it performed? 7. How much is a "firkin"? How many gallons in the six waterpots? How much water was put in? 7. What is wine made of? Do you think Christ made a wine that would intoxicate?

THE RULER'S JUDGMENT.—Who was the "ruler" of the feast? What did he think of this water made wine? 10. What custom does he speak of? Was it a good one? Does God give the best first and the worst last? If we are trying to be Christians does he make it more joyful for us every day, or harder for us? What did this miracle do? 11. What effect did it have? 11.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

TIME.—"Third day" from the calling of Nathanael, detailed in the last chapter. It is a journey of about three days from Judea to Galilee.

PLACE.—Cana (*reedy*). Two places claim to be the Cana of this miracle. One is *Kef'r-Kenna*, four and a half miles north-east of Nazareth, the other is *Kana el Jelil*, seven miles nearly due north of the same place. Scholars have warmly espoused one side or the other, until there is a long array of eminent names in favor of each location. Robinson, Meyer, Alford, and Trench are in favor of the latter, on account of the philological identity of the names, *Kana el Jelil* meaning "Cana of Galilee." Hepworth, Dixon, Thomson, author of *The Land and the Book*, etc., contend for *Kef'r Kenna*. The latter, however, seems to have raised its claim since the sixteenth century, while the other was regarded as the real Cana long before that. The monks have decided on *Kef'r Kenna*, and point out the very house where the marriage was celebrated, and the identical water-pots of stone—with the same accuracy that they did when, beforetime they exhibited the same things at *Kana el Jelil*. It was at Cana also that the nobleman's son was healed. 4:46-54.

PERSONS.—First, Mary the mother of Jesus. From her familiarity with the needs of the household, her interest in it, and the authority she exercised, it is

our ways. Christ's "hour" was when the wine was *all* out. It is not in the divine character to give aid until there is actual need of aid.

THE MIRACLE.—5–8. Mary's command to the servants indicates that she expects something extraordinary—so extraordinary that she thinks it needful to instruct them to do whatsoever he should command them. *Six water-pots*, placed near the entrance, as is even now the custom. *After the manner of the purifying of the Jews.* See Matt. 15:2; 23:25; Mark 7:3; Luke 11:38. *Firkin*—about 9 gallons. Each jar, therefore, contained from 18 to 27 gallons, and all the jars from 108 to 162. Not only enough, but more than enough. Always a Bountiful Giver—in harvest fields as well as in miracles. A king—he gives royally. It is just what we should have expected of him—just what was his habit of doing. John 6:5–13. *Fill to the brim.* They were—water-pots; not vessels for holding wine. It could not, therefore, be charged that in them were some lees of wine, and that this made the water taste like wine. And as they were filled to the brim with water no wine afterward could have been poured in to effect the same result. Every circumstance goes to prove the reality of the miracle. *Draw out now.* Somewhere between the filling and the drawing the miracle took place. But who can tell just where? All that we know is that "the water that was made wine" was taken to the governor of the feast. We live in the very presence of miracles just as great as this, but familiarity with them has taken away all our astonishment. It has been well suggested that this very miracle is one that we constantly witness in the growth and ripening of the grape. The vine draws from the earth its moisture, and somewhere and somehow the water that it thus gets is changed into wine before the summer is gone. Is the process any the less mysterious? Do we know anything more about it? All the difference is that in the one case it takes a summer's influence; in the other only a spoken word.

But the one who thus bounteously contributed to the unessential wants of others is the same one who after forty days of fasting refused to minister to his own extreme necessities. As *Trench* very happily says: "He who turned water into wine might have made bread out of stones; but, spreading a table for others, he is content to hunger and thirst himself."

THE RULER'S JUDGMENT.—The "governor" of the feast was, in modern phrase, "the chairman" of the occasion, selected by the family, probably. His familiar comment on the excellence of the new wine is entirely inconsistent with the idea which has been advocated by some that he was simply a head servant. As governor it was his duty, or privilege, perhaps, first to taste and test the meats and drinks.

His commendation is half jocular. *Every man at the beginning*, etc. *Well drunk*—not intoxicated. He refers to the fact that as men approach satiety in drinking their tastes are dulled, and so men reserve their poorest wine to the last because then their guests can not detect its inferior quality. He makes mention of a general custom, it will be observed, which can not be taken to indicate the condition of those at *this* feast. The inference that the guests here were not in a condition to tell good wine from bad is refuted by the fact that *his* palate was not so blunted but that immediately he recognized the superexcellence of the wine just brought in. To us who have faith in the One who blessed this marriage-feast there is no other assurance needed than the conviction we have that He who would not give way himself to temptation, would not miraculously furnish the means for the continuance of a sottish carousal had there been such a thing going on. His simple presence is guaranty of the temperate character of the feast. *The good wine*—i. e., the best wine—so good as to cause the governor to send for the

bridegroom in order that he might express to him his astonishment at its excellence.

REMARKS.—1. *Temperance.* With reference to the temperance question, around this miracle there has waged a war of words. Barnes and a few others hold that the wine thus miraculously made could be no other than such as the freshly expressed juice of the grape. These few against a host of others who say that as it was meant to supply the place of a wine which no doubt was possessed of some intoxicating qualities, it too must have been of the same nature. Though ourselves of the total abstinence faith, we are inclined to think that the majority construction is the true one. But of this we are equally certain: that there was no intemperance practiced, promoted, or countenanced on that occasion; and that it does not follow that because water was changed into wine then that it is lawful to drink it now, any more than because it is safe to throw a lighted match into wet gunpowder it is equally safe to throw it into gunpowder dry. Climate, character, appetites, natural and hereditary, and differences in the quality of wine have so changed that what was then a harmless beverage is now man's bitterest enemy. It is safe to assume that were Jesus again present and among us, the miracle would not be repeated. For those who are constantly citing this miracle as a sort of an obligation upon them to use wine, we quote the witty retort of John B. Gough, who says that they are then under equal obligations to eat unleavened bread, for that was the kind produced in the miracle of the loaves and fishes!

This miracle is an immediate fulfillment of the promise made in the last chapter to Nathanael: "Thou shalt see greater things than these." It was performed in order to show forth his glory (Is. 40: 5), and its effect was that his disciples had their faith in him greatly enlarged. 11. This "beginning of miracles" was the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 9: 1, 2.

But in the symbolism of the miracle is our main interest. And first in regard to the *Law*. Moses in *his* first miracle changed water into blood. How aptly the two primal miracles of the two dispensations illustrate their characteristics! The one was a prefiguring of the sure wrath of God—the other an equally strong setting forth of his mercy. The one indicated the penalty of the law—the other the joyful communion of man with God. 2 Cor. 3: 6–9. The water-pots represented the burdensome, oppressive rites of purification. Christ brought in a new era when the service of the Lord was no longer grievous because the purifying was the cleansing of the heart and not a mere ceremonial rite. The water of the Old Testament was changed to wine in the New—sorrow was turned into joy. The disciples of John the Baptist, the rearward of those who marched under the discipline of the Law, looking upon his asceticism in the wilderness had no doubt come to look upon austerity as the highest kind of virtue. Here they were undeceived, and were taught that the highest virtue computed with joyful, domestic affairs and with the duties of home.

And it was a miracle of *transformation*—transmuting the common into the super-excellent. It was a most pertinent setting forth of the way in which from that time forth the vivifying power of Christ's love should change law into liberty, the baptism of water into the baptism of the Holy Ghost, sinners into saints, men into angels, and discord into harmony, making a very heaven out of earth, and realizing the promise in Isaiah 61: 3: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Points for Arrows.

1.—This miracle was performed in answer to the prayer of Mary, in order that Christ's glory should become manifest. His glory could be shown even in

adding to the happiness of a wedding feast. Let us not, then, fail to add to our prayers for even the humblest things: "For the glory of thy name, O God." 1 K. 18: 36, 37; 2 K. 19: 19; Ps. 79: 9; 83: 18; Jer. 14: 7, 21; 1 Cor. 10: 31; Col. 3: 17.

2.—After the prayer comes the waiting—often the hardest part to bear. God's time is not always ours, though he never puts us off a moment too long. Lam. 3: 25, 26; Ps. 37: 7; 130: 5, 6; 40: 1; Is. 30: 18; 40: 31.

3.—How different are the eyes of faith from those of unbelief. They will often see a Yes where the others only can behold a No. Gen. 32: 26; Is. 62: 6, 7; Micah 7: 7; Matt. 15: 27, 28; Luke 11: 5–8; 18: 1–7; Eph. 6: 18; Col. 4: 2.

4.—"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." Safe rule. Even if it be so foolish a thing as to fill up jars with water when it is wine that is wanted. Gen. 6: 22; 22: 2, 3; Is. 1: 19; Jer. 7: 23; 1 Cor. 13: 12; 2 Cor. 5: 7; Heb. 11: 1, 27.

5.—Man gives *his* best things first and the worst comes last. Not so with God. His blessings, satisfying though they be even from the beginning, so increase in their joy-giving qualities that it is at last said: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Ps. 16: 11; 31: 19; Matt. 25: 34; Rom. 8: 18; 1 Cor. 2: 9; 2 Cor. 3: 18; Phil. 4: 7; Col. 3: 4; 1 John 3: 2.

6.—The transforming power of Christ upon us—so great that in him we become "new creatures." 3: 3; Rom. 12: 2; 1 Cor. 15: 51; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Eph. 2: 10; 4: 23, 24; Phil. 3: 21; Col. 3: 1–3, 5–10.

HYMN.

I hear the Saviour say:
Without me thou wilt fall;
Child of weakness, watch and pray,
Find in me thine all in all.

Cho.—Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

BLACKBOARD.

WATER INTO WINE!
So can we be
TRANSFORMED
BY THE POWER
OF CHRIST.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—After Andrew and Peter and James and John and Nathanael had become the disciples of Christ, the Saviour went back into Galilee near where he lived, to a little town called Cana. (Show where Galilee was, where Jesus lived, and about where Cana was.) He got there in about three days. There was a marriage in Cana, and to that Jesus and his disciples were invited. Though it had just been made known that he was the Son of God, yet he went to this feast. How condescending Christ is! An invitation—a sincere invitation—to him is all that is necessary from you to induce him to come and dwell in your heart. At that marriage feast were Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. Very likely, too, it was some one that was related to him who was married. Perhaps that was the last real happy time Jesus had with his mother and brothers.

2.—When Jesus and his disciples came that made so many that pretty soon the supply of wine gave out. In those days the people were in the habit of drinking wine. It was not, however, the sort of wine that is sold now. This will make a man drunk; but one could drink a great deal of that without its having a bad effect on him. Mary came and told Jesus that there was no more wine. She wanted

him in some way to get some more. Probably she did not think he would by a miracle furnish some, but she thought that in some way he would get some. [Reasons for her faith in him—before he was born—at his birth—his talk in the temple.]

3.—His reply—gently given—"Woman," etc. He was henceforth to be known as the Son of God—not as the Son of Mary. What he did after this was to be done because of his Father in heaven—not because of his mother upon earth. "Mine hour," etc.—his hour not always ours. We want things done *now*. He sees that it is best to wait. His hour when we most need help—when the wine was all out. "Whatsoever he saith unto you, *do it*." Good rule to go by.

4.—The miracle—the six water-pots—the water poured in. Poured in as water, drawn out as wine. What the "governor" said. Power of Jesus to change our hearts just as easily as he changed this water. They are evil—he can cleanse them. How? With his own blood he makes them white as snow.

MEMORY VERSES.

"White as snow"—Oh! what a promise
For the heavy laden breast!
When by faith the soul receives it,
Weariness is changed to rest.

"Red like crimson," deep as scarlet—
Scarlet of the deepest dye—
Are the manifold transgressions
Which upon my conscience lie.

BLACKBOARD.

WATER MADE WINE!

A Black Heart
Made
WHITE AS SNOW.

LESSON XXX.—JULY 25, 1875.—THE NEW BIRTH.

SCRIPTURE.—John 3:7-17. Commit 3-8, 14-17; Primary Verse, 16.

7 Marvel not I that said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."—JOHN 1:12.

TOPIC.—New in Christ Jesus.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Eph.**	**2:1-10**	**Quickened as From the Dead.**
T.	**2 Cor.**	**5:10-21**	**Made New Creatures in Christ.**
W.	**Gal.**	**5:16-26**	**Made Free from the Law.**
Th.	**Jas.**	**1:17-27**	**Begotten by the Will of God.**
F.	**1 Pet.**	**1:1-23**	**Redeemed by Precious Blood.**
S.	**Tit.**	**3:1-7**	**The Washing of Regeneration.**
S.	**1 Cor.**	**15:35-58**	**From Corruptible to Incorruptible.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

NICODEMUS.—Who was Nicodemus? 1. When did he come to Jesus? 2. Why "by night"? 12:42. What did he say to him? 2. Was he right? What do you think made Nicodemus come at all? What two things afterwards did he do for Jesus? 7:44–51; 19:39.

THE NEW BIRTH.—What did Jesus tell him must be done? 3. What is meant by "must be born again"? What did Nicodemus think it meant? 4. Why must we be born again? Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:7, 8. How is it spoken of in Matt. 4:17? In 2 Cor. 5:17? In Tit. 3:5. Haven't you often wished that your heart could be made over? But a *new* heart is better yet, is it not? See the promise in Ezek. 36:26.

THE SECOND ANSWER.—What did Jesus say in his second answer to Nicodemus? 5–8. What is to be born "of water and the Spirit"? See an illustration in Matt. 3:16. Why does Christ tell him: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," etc.? See what Nicodemus had said. 4. If Nicodemus could have been a child once more would *that* have made his heart good? It was the *heart* that needed a new birth—not the body. Was Nicodemus astonished at this? 7. What does Christ liken the effect of the new birth to? 8. You have known bad people to become good because of this new birth. You could see the change, but you could not see the cause of it any more than you can see the wind. But was it any the less real for all that?

THE THIRD ANSWER.—9–17. Did Nicodemus now understand? 9. Ask your teacher what is meant by "master in Israel." Then what did Jesus tell him? 11, 12. What was necessary first before Nicodemus could understand? 3. What does the Saviour refer to in the fourteenth verse? Why was he to be "lifted up"? 15. Why was this wonderful sacrifice? 16. Why did Christ come into the world? 17. Have you permitted him to save *you*, or is his coming in vain so far as you are concerned?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

NICODEMUS.—From the account given of him in this chapter, we know that Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews, and was a teacher of great eminence among them. 1, 10. He was a man of great wealth and influence. 7:45–51; 19:39. From these references it would appear that Nicodemus, at some time or other, had found out in his own experience the mystery of the new birth, which in this lesson appears to him so impenetrable. Tradition says that after the ascension he openly acknowledged his faith, was thereupon deposed from his high position, beaten, and driven from Jerusalem, and was supported in a country-seat by his kinsman, Gamaliel.

HIS VISIT—took place on Christ's first sojourn at Jerusalem. The occasion of it evidently was the miracle or miracles that he had heard that Jesus performed. 2. He had come to believe that Christ was a "teacher come from God," because of these miracles. See the recognized tests in Deut. 13:1; 18:22; Acts 2:22; 10:38. Probably, in accordance with the general expectation of his times, he was looking for a Saviour, and had a half hope that this "teacher" might be the Messiah. And yet his belief is not, in his opinion, sufficiently well-founded for him to peril his great reputation by openly paying any attention to it. He is actuated by the spirit afterwards manifested by his brother rulers, as shown in John 12:42. And for his timidity and shame he gets a fine rebuke. 19–21. But the darkness in which he came was but a type of that spiritual darkness in which he and others like him were groping for the Messiah.

THE NEW BIRTH.—3–8. As he did with Nathanael, Christ, in his interview with Nicodemus, penetrates at once to the very heart of his listener, and answers not to his words, but to his thoughts. The commencement of Christ's ministry was first illustrated by the miracle of transformation, and now we have it still further exemplified in the announcement of the necessity of the still greater miracle of regeneration. In the admission of Nicodemus that Jesus is a "teacher come from God," there is an indirect appeal for that teacher to unfold what he knows about the kingdom of God, and to say what his mission is. There is, also, an assumption of knowledge on the part of Nicodemus, which needs only a little enlightenment. "*We know*, etc. The answer introduced by that solemnly emphatic Verily, verily,

is to him astounding. Christ tells him that without a new birth he can not even see the kingdom of God—that he does not yet stand even upon the threshold of true knowledge.

The announcement that one "must be born again,"or, rather, as the margin has it, "from above," is significant of the entirety of the change that is necessary before one can see the kingdom of God. In it is plainly written the doctrine of total depravity. It is a declaration that the heart, "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," needs something more than a mere cleansing—it needs a new birth. It is a judgment of the builder that every stone of the building must be removed, and be replaced by new material altogether. But let us give the Bible idea of the New Birth.

1st.—*Its Necessity.* Gen. 6:5; Job 14:4; Ps. 51:5; Prov. 28: 26; Eccl. 9:3; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21–23; Rom. 8:7, 8; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1.

2d.—*Its Source.* John 1:13; Tit. 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 John 2:29.

3d.—*How Described.* "New creation": 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:10. "Spiritual resurrection": Rom. 6:4–6; Eph. 2:1–5; Col. 2:12; 3:1. "New heart": 1 Sam. 10:9; Ezek. 36:26. "Circumcision of the heart": Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:29; Col. 2:11. "New man": 1 Sam. 10:6; Eph. 2:15; 4:24. "Inward man": Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 4:16. "Washing of regeneration": Tit. 3:5. "Born again": Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.

4th.—*Its Effect.* Begets likeness to God: Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10. To Christ: Rom. 8:29.

5th.—*Evidences of* Faith in Christ: 1 John 3:9; 5:1, 18. Love of God's law: Rom. 7:22. Brotherly love: John 13:35; 1 John 3:14–24; 4:7; 5:1, 2. Victory over the world: 1 John 5:4.

6th.—*Instrumentalities of* Word of God; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23. Ministry of the Gospel: 1 Cor. 4:15.

Did Nicodemus understand that Christ referred to a spiritual birth, or was he able to give the words none but a physical interpretation? The latter, at least, is not likely. The Rabbins were in the habit of comparing a proselyte to a new born babe. As one learned in the law, he must have been familiar with the "circumcision of the heart," spoken of in Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4: and with the "new heart" and "new spirit" referred to in Ezek. 11:19; 36:26; Ps. 51:10. The fact, therefore, that the phrase "Ye must be born again" had only a spiritual meaning, presumptively would be readily apprehended by him. Assuming that this is so, his reply would mean either that it is impossible that a Jew, who is an inheritor of the promises, should have to take the same position as a proselyte; or that it is as impossible for an old man, fixed as he is in character, habits, and thoughts, to become spiritually new, as it would be for him to enter his mother's womb and be born again. The latter is probably the true interpretation. When he is told that he must be born again, Nicodemus falls into the exact phraseology of Christ, in order the better to express what seems to him the physical impossibility of such a change.

In his reply to the incredulity of Nicodemus, the Saviour speaks with more particularity. First he had told him that he "must be born again;" now he tells him he must be born "of water and of the Spirit." "Of water" could only, of course, refer to the baptism already made familiar by John. "Of Spirit" could only refer to birth through the Holy Ghost—of which latter fact Nicodemus was ignorant. For prophecies concerning such baptism see Is. 52:15; Ezek. 36:25; Zech. 13:1. Baptism is the form merely, and needs the Spirit to give it life. Alone it is as empty of life as was man until God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. See 6:63; 1 Cor. 15:45. Water is mentioned first because the gift of the Spirit usually, though not always, followed upon baptism. Acts 2:38. One of the exceptions is in Acts 10:47. The pre-supposed qualification for baptism is belief in Christ. Mark 16:16. The last reference is an important one in respect

of its showing that although obligatory upon every believer, it is not the absolute essential to salvation. "He that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved, but he that *believeth* not shall be damned." So, with like significance, is all mention of water omitted in verses 6 and 8 of the chapter we are studying. Like every other ordinance of God, such as the Lord's supper, it is conscientiously to be observed, but let no one exalt the ceremony to the place belonging by right only to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, of which it is merely the symbol.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh. A reply to Nicodemus on the very plane of his enquiry. An intimation that even if he could be born again, in the manner he suggested, it would not in the least change his spirit. The wish often felt that one could live his life over again would be a useless boon even if it could be given. In no such way as that could a life be redeemed. The appetites would be the same, the will be as uncontrollable, and the temptations as strong. The only possible opportunity to overcome the evil that is within us is to let the Lord overcome for us—the only way to have an unsullied soul is to let that soul be born again. In the very idea of birth after the flesh is the idea of death, while that after the Spirit is equally suggestive of life. But one of the very best commentaries on this part of our lesson is to be found in the eighth chapter of Romans.

The Illustration.—The new birth, in its evident manifestations, is like the wind. How? *Bloweth where it listeth.* Does not come at the behest of any one but God. *Whence it cometh.* From what quarter. A revival may commence in the most unlikely places—in a hut more often than in a palace. The stirrings of the Spirit comes from many and from unexpected directions. *Whither it goeth.* Never can tell where it will take one or what it will lead him to do. It led some fishermen to give up their all and follow Jesus. Real consecration has led to surprising changes of character—to the giving up of many immoral practices.

INCREDULITY.—Nicodemus can not yet see how these things can be. His face has expressed his astonishment. 7. He lacks the very experience that is necessary in order to enable him to understand it. No one can understand the mystery except him who has experienced it. And like the man that was cured of his blindness, all that *he* can say is, that "whereas I was blind now I see." The unbelief of Nicodemus respecting the possibility of such a radical change of heart as is implied in being "born again" is repeated in the case of every one who looks in upon his sinful nature and says: "It's no use—*my* heart can not be changed!"

THE REBUKE.—10–12. *Art a teacher?* Not merely an ordinary teacher, but one of great reputation. Ought to have known from the setting forth of the new birth in the Old Testament. See references already given. Strange how the great truths of the kingdom are revealed unto babes and hidden from the wise and prudent. The men who were students of the law could not read those words that were specially illuminated with the splendor of the coming glories of the kingdom of God. The publicans and harlots caught a glimpse of their brightness first and went in before them. Matt. 21: 30, 31.

It is well to notice the method of the reply. What is the logic by which he endeavors to convince Nicodemus and cure him of his unbelief? "*We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.*" No argument whatever. He meets ignorance with the assertion of absolute knowledge. So infidelity is always best met. One may not be able to cope in debate with learned skeptics, but any one can say: "Whereas I was blind, now I see." *Ye receive not our witness.* Not Nicodemus only, but the body he represented—the Sanhedrin. *Earthly things.* The new birth earthly! Earthly in the sense of being visible and of taking place here. So is the breaking

of the germ through its envelope as it lies embedded in the soil an earthly process, but it is the upper life bursting through the lower, and shooting upward to its rightful place. *Heavenly things.* The divine counsels by which this change in the soul is brought about. Nicodemus had asked: *How can these things be?* He was like those who want to know all about election, foreordination, etc., before they enter into the new life. God here shows the method of our learning—earthly things first, and heavenly things afterward. He opens only one door at a time. If one wants to know what is inside the temple let him enter the door.

No man hath ascended. No human mind has been able, as it were, to soar up into heaven and penetrate the divine plans and purposes concerning man. No one can tell us of those things except him who came down from heaven. *Which is in heaven.* Whose home is in heaven. Or it may refer to the "God-consciousness" which he possessed, by which he could be every where present.

SALVATION.—13-21. New birth expressed in a new way—as a cure. *Simile*—lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness: Num. 21:8. By this mention that lifting up of the serpent is shown to be a type of the lifting up of Christ. Notice, first, its necessity. *Must be lifted up.* Why? *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish.* That "must" means that there was no other means of cure. He saw the end from the beginning. All the while that his disciples were looking toward the glories of a coming earthly kingdom, he saw the agonizing cross. 2:19; 8:28; 12:32, 33. Notice, next, the likeness to the type. 1. Both were lifted up. Both were harmless representations of a bad reality. The piece of brass that Moses lifted up was called a serpent, though it was not a serpent. So Christ was called "a deceiver" (Matt. 27:63); was declared to be in league with Beelzebub (Matt. 12:24); possessed with a devil (John 8:48); was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3); made sin who knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21); was made a curse. Gal. 6:3. Both were, apparently, helpless, but were actually victorious. Both esteemed as a reproach, but really lifted up in honor. A look, in each case, is all that is necessary for salvation.

Next, observe why Christ was lifted up. *For God so loved.* Now Jesus is telling him of "heavenly things." As one has said: "It will take all eternity for us to find out the meaning there is in this sentence." Luther calls it: "The Bible in miniature." As in the acorn the great oak is packed away, so in this verse is expressed the whole of all the gospels. If everything were lost but this we would still have enough left to save the world. Weigh each word, making each one emphatic in its turn, if you would know how much there is in it. *For*—reason for the action. *God*—one no less than Jehovah. *So*—ah, who can sound the depth of that "so!" *Loved*—it would not have been possible for any other than God himself to have declared that he *loved* us—the heart of the Infinite going out to the finite. *The World.* Not Judea, not Palestine, as Nicodemus and all the Jews were disposed to think; basing their belief upon Ps. 2:8, 9; Mal. 4:1. *That he gave.* The Son of God was a gift. His coming was not merited, nor purchased, nor in any way the fulfillment of an obligation. It was even unasked, and, alas, unwelcome. *His only begotten Son.* The sacrifice put in those words in which we can best understand its greatness. What idolatry of devotion is lavished on *an only begotten son!* That the world might understand beforehand how great was the suffering of this surrender, God asked Abraham to take *his* only son, Isaac, and make of him an offering—and, then, knowing that father's agony, would not allow him to complete the immolation. *Whosoever.* "The world" and "whosoever" must have greatly enlarged Nicodemus' idea of the boundaries of God's love. Heretofore he had limited it to the borders of his own land. Suddenly

now his narrow horizon lifted, until he could see that all lands and all peoples alike shared the paternal solicitude of God. "Whosoever" is a designation to which every one can answer. As one has most aptly said: "If I should find my own name written in this promise I would begin to think that there might be some other man of my name, but I know that 'whosoever' means *me*." *Believeth.* Simple act! So simple that men stagger at it, saying: "It can not be; surely something more must be required of me." But there is not. It is a look for a life—and a life for a look. *In him.* In Christ. Not a belief about Christ, but in Christ. Not a general belief in his mission, but faith that he came to save "even me." *Should not perish.* Sure to perish, then, without this divine interposition. The Son of man came on no idle errand. Let those who lull themselves into security with the idea that there is no future punishment, ponder well these words: "For God gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should *not perish*." It was no ordinary fate to save us from which took so great a sacrifice. Measure it by that, and then say what it is! *But have everlasting life.* If we have no plummet that can sound the depths of the gulf of despair, neither have we anything that can reach the altitude of eternal life. It is infinity either way. From what a fate Christ has saved us—to what a bliss has he given us a heritage! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world. It has been already shown that from Ps. 2:9: Mal. 4:1; (see also Matt. 3:10) the Jews supposed that the Messiah would come as a condemning judge—to the rest of the world. Instead, he came as a Saviour. He might well have come to pronounce judgment, for the world deserved it; but, instead, he issued a proclamation of mercy. It appears, however, that his coming, in one sense, is a judgment. 18–21. It is a judgment in the sense that it even now indicates the result of that final decree that shall eternally separate the evil from the good. His advent is the introduction of Light into the world. All who love the light come forth to bask in it. Those who love darkness rather than light hide themselves from it, and dwell in moral gloom. Turn over an old board that for some time has been lying in one place, and you will have a good insect illustration of hatred of light. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* Judgment, in fact, is self-pronounced. It is merely the expression of one's own choice—made here, and eternally perpetuated. And that choice is shown here in acts. The heart of the Christian opens under the influence of Christ as buds open under the influence of the sun, until his life becomes a fragrance, and his motives open to all. The heart of the sinner, conscious of its corruption, closes over its guilty secrets, hiding them from the gaze of men, and dreading the eye of God. It is a terrible thought, but, nevertheless, true, that such a soul, to escape the searching eye of Omniscience, would choose the darkness of the uttermost depths of hell rather than stand in the blaze of the glories of heaven.

Points for Arrows.

1.—Most men, in coming to Jesus, like Nicodemus, come in the night. They make of it a more difficult thing than it actually is. Shutting their eyes—looking inwardly upon themselves—they grope for him who is held up high on a radiant cross, so that all the world might see him. Let us not, in this way, shut out our chance for salvation. Deut. 29:2–4; Is. 6:9, 10; Ezek. 12:12; Mark 4:12; John 12:40; Rom. 11:8; 2 Cor. 3:14, 15; 2 Thess. 2:10–12.

2.—Among all the miracles performed by Christ there is nothing like the new birth—the regeneration of a lost soul.

Is. 1:18; 55:7: Matt. 18:23–27; Luke 7:47; Rom. 5:20, 21; Eph. 1:7, 8; 1 Tim. 1:15; Tit. 3:3–7.

3.—God *gave*. Salvation is a free gift to whomsoever will take it. Is. 55:1; John 4:14; 6:37; 7:37–39; Rom. 3:24; 11:6; Eph. 2:8; Rev. 3:18; 21:6; 22:17.

4.—Though salvation is obtained *without* works, it is evidenced *by* works. Matt. 7:16–20; John 13:35; 15:2; Rom. 2:13; Jas. 2:18; 1 John 2:6, 9; 3:7.

5.—"God so loved the world." It is a fact, over which we may well be astonished. But what shall express our amazement when we realize that he loved an unloving world. Luke 19:10; Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:19; Eph. 2:4–7; Tit. 3:4–7; 1 John 4:9, 10.

HYMN.

In the darkness of the night
Resting o'er Judea's plains,
To the Lord the ruler comes;
Heavenly wisdom there obtains.

Cho.—Born again we all must be
If the kingdom we would see.
Repeat.

Not alone by noble deeds,
Not by penance, pain, or prayer;
Not alone by human creeds
Can we find an entrance there.

BLACKBOARD.

VERILY, VERILY I say unto Thee
EXCEPT A MAN
BE BORN AGAIN
HE CAN NOT SEE
THE KINGDOM of GOD.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

2.—There was a man called Nicodemus who had heard of the miracles that Jesus had done. This man was a very learned man, and was a ruler among the Jews. He knew that Jesus must be a teacher come from God or else he could not perform such wonderful miracles. He was in hopes that he might be the Saviour, but he was not sure. So he went to see Jesus and talk with him. At what time do you think he went? It was by night. He was afraid to go in the day time for fear people would notice it.

2.—What did Christ tell this man? The first thing he told him was this: "Verily, verily I say unto you except a man be born again he can not see the kingdom of God. Every one should learn that by heart. "Be born again"—what does that mean? You have often wished that you could be real good all the time, and when you have seen any one that is real good you have said: "I wish I was like that one." Well, what was it that kept you from being good like the one you saw? It was your evil heart that did that. Now if in some way your bad heart could be made over into a good one, how easy then it would be always to act right. It would be just the same as if you had been born again and a new heart had taken the place of the evil one. Well, that is just what Jesus means by being "born again." We must have a new heart—a good heart. And that he will give us if we ask him. We *must* have this new heart or we can not see the kingdom of God. No bad hearts enter there.

3.—How do we know when hearts are changed? How do we know when there is a wind? We can't see the wind. We don't know where it comes from nor where it goes to. (Read verse 8.) But we can *feel* it. We can see what it does. So when the Holy Spirit moves upon our hearts we can feel that, and we can see what it does. Every time we are sorry for sins or feel that we ought to be Christians, then the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts. When it has caused us to

loveChrist and we are trying to serve him, then we know that we are "born again."

4.—Nicodemus could not understand this at all, and so Christ told him the same thing in an easier way. One time the Israelites, when they were in the wilderness, were bitten by fiery, flying serpents. Their bite was sure death. They had no way that they could cure themselves. God provided a cure. He told Moses to make a brazen serpent and lift it up on a pole so that every one could see, and whoever looked on it was immediately cured. Like the Israelites, we have been bitten by a serpent—the serpent that tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden. What serpent was that? There is no way that we can cure the bite. But God provided a cure for this, also. He told Nicodemus what this cure was to be. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now, who was the "Son of man"? Upon what was he "lifted up"? What was he lifted up for? "That whosoever," etc. The Israelites, when they were bitten by the serpents, looked to the Brazen Serpent and were healed. What must we do? How often need we look? So you see the "new birth" is just the same as the cure.

5.—How came Jesus to die for us? (Read the 17th verse, commenting on each word as per the exposition already given.)

MEMORY VERSES.

'Tis the promise of God
Full salvation to give
Unto him who on Jesus,
His Son, will believe.

Hallelujah, 'tis done,
I believe on the Son;
I am saved by the blood
Of the crucified One.

BLACKBOARD.

"YE MUST
BE BORN AGAIN."

Editorial Miscellany

The Sunday-school statistics given at Baltimore by the International Statistical Secretary are exceedingly interesting and instructive to those who are willing to take the pains to sift out their meaning. These are really the first full returns, and give us the first opportunity that we have had to know where we are. According to his figures there are in the United States 69,871 Sabbath-schools, having a total scholar-membership of 5,790,683, officered by 753,060 teachers. It is a grand army whose marshaled hosts are in this way represented, and the felicitations called out by this imposing array of facts were, by no means, unwarrantable. But these figures, grand as they may be, are not great enough to hide the still greater totals into which the numerals roll up, whose aggregates are necessary to express the number of the unreached. The number of persons of "school age" in the United States is given in the last *Educational Cyclopedia*, at 13,458,835. It will be seen, therefore, that the Sabbath-school is not yet reaching *half of the children of the United States.* Inasmuch as the school records do not, in all probability, contain the names of the children who live in the most illiterate districts, and as the returns of the Sunday-school include many who are over "school age," it is a question whether the Sabbath-school has gathered in more than a third. No time for gratulations yet, brethren, so

long as these figures tell such a story. No rest can be taken so long as they show such a sum of ignorance respecting the salvation which we have to offer.

In one respect, however, we can congratulate ourselves. We have already outstripped the public schools. They have enrolled upon their attendance books only 4,299,739, leaving a balance in our favor of 1,500,944. But they indicate one error, also. From the reports we deduce the fact that the average Sabbath-school has about 11 teachers and 83 scholars—a much greater number than we supposed. The average is too large. We have been gathering too many in our great schools, have prided ourselves on their numbers, and let whole districts go without any. That average must be reduced. We want a thousand Father Paxsons to plant small schools, and then we shall have no occasion to mourn for the harvest. The trouble will be to get persons willing to take the charge of little schools. In this country we must have "big" things or none. The difference between a large school or a small one is the difference between success and failure—in popular estimation. And so, fields that are white to the harvest absolutely have no laborers in them.

The main benefit of statistics is not merely to show what has been done, but what yet remains to be done. As has been indicated, two-thirds of the children of the United States are yet to be gathered into our Sunday-schools. But it is a pity to have our duty put into such indefinite form. Let us do several of the "well organized" states the service of pointing out to them the special work that each one has to do. Illinois is proud over the fact that she has 486,311 scholars in the Sunday-school. She is one of the banner states. But those school statistics show that there are 969,828 persons of school age in the state. Here, then, are 423,517 children not in our Sunday-schools. The "organization" of Illinois needs tightening up. It leaks badly. New York has 729,000 in her Sabbath-schools. Her school records, again, show that there ought to be 1,560,820—a difference of 831,820. Her net sadly needs mending. We tabulate a few more:

	In S. S.	Of school age.	Out of S. S.
Indiana,	251,937	631,549	379,612
Iowa,	354,642	491,344	136,642
Michigan,	149,823	421,322	271,499
New Jersey,	167,805	286,444	118,639
Ohio,	314,835	991,708	676,873
Pennsylvania,	709,845	1,200,000	490,155

We are sorry that these statistics will not reach the different state officers until after the conventions of this year. We shall miss the resolutions of thanks they would bring! All the states, however, do not lay under such heavy obligations to duty. Massachusetts has only 17,000 according to the statistics to be garnered in; Connecticut has only 13,608; and Rhode Island has 1,944 *more in her Sabbath-schools than she has enrolled as of school age.* Three cheers for little Rhody!

At the beginning of the year most a strange history found revelation through the investigations of Dr. Harris of New York. His attention was called to the extraordinary proportion of crime and pauperism to the number of inhabitants in a county in New York, on the upper Hudson—over ten per cent. being in the alms-house, alone. Probably this fact, of itself would not have made any moving impression on his mind, but a certain frequently recurring name did, and caused him to make an investigation which resulted in making known some facts of the utmost consequence to the public.

He traced back the genealogy of the families to whom that name was common, and found that the seed from which they all sprang was a little waif of a girl, called "Margaret," who, some seventy years ago, found no home nor welcome at any of the firesides in the place where—no one knows how—she was cast adrift. This girl, who

was suffered to grow up as best she could, of course did not grow up in ways of virtue. The whole number of her descendants amount to several hundred. Two hundred of these turned out to be well-developed criminals, and a large number of the remainder have been idiots, imbeciles, loafers, drunkards, lunatics, paupers, prostitutes, and beggars. The descendants of the community that would not care for a friendless child have been taxed hundreds of thousands of dollars for the support and restraint of her offspring. In the crime and contamination which she brought into their midst she has had a royal revenge for every slight she suffered, and for every time that a home door was shut in her face. A few dollars expended for her support and education then would have opened the way to a reputable life—now the burden of the maintenance and constraint of her progeny, already large, annually grows larger, and there is no telling what figures it will reach, nor when it will be removed. Any one can see that it would have been a wise piece of political economy voluntarily to have cared for this girl, instead of being compelled to guard against and support her descendants.

Margaret's case is only one of hundreds of thousands of others that have occurred, and that are daily occurring. No state nor community can afford to let a vagabond boy grow up a vagabond. No state nor community can afford to let destitute children mature uncared for —learning from their necessities to be predatory and hostile. No state nor community can afford to suffer children to grow up ignorant and uneducated. For in the future there will be such a retribution in the outlay necessary to control imbecility, debauchery, and crime as will make all present expenditures to avoid them seem utterly insignificant. Margaret's case, too, incidentally shows the value of Sunday-school work, and particularly of the work in mission Sunday-schools. Many another like her has been, by this means, reached and saved. And wherever such a school exists it should command the most generous support, and receive the benedictions of the community in which it is located.

THE Illinois convention was certainly an improvement on its predecessors. The programme was notably a good one, and good judgment was shown in the assignment of topics. What was a good idea, also, very few of the speakers selected were those with whom the convention goers had become intimately familiar, from hearing them so often. The interest in the convention was unflagging from first to last, which, of itself, is the best of endorsements. The enthusiasm was the greatest, probably, over the drill on Bible Geography, given by Prof. E. C. Mitchell, D. D., of this city. In that exercise the delegates really felt that they were learning something, and showed their grateful sense of the fact in an expression of thanks at its close. In response to a very warm invitation from Jacksonville, the convention will assemble in that city next year, and, for the nonce, will be a mass convention.

THAT so much interest was excited by this drill on Bible Geography is proof of the fact so often asserted by us in THE TEACHER, that delegates come up to these annual gatherings chiefly for the instruction that they may get, and not merely to hear enthasiastic and stirring speeches. The makers of programmes and the speakers that are chosen will please note this, and give us more such subjects and more such treatments of them. The question usually considered by both of these caterers for the public is: How can we rouse the zeal of the convention to the highest pitch, and send the delegates away in a *furor of* enthusiasm? The question that each delegate asks before he leaves home is: How much real service is this convention going to be to me? And after he returns, and the emotion of the occasion has all subsided, he recurs again to that

question, and asks himself how much he has really learned. The two classes, the talkers and the listeners, do not meet always upon the same plane; and the programme makers and the orators must remember that, in the end, the delegates have the advantage, for if, upon the maturest reflection, they decide that what they have obtained is not worth their while, the verdict will be announced in empty benches.

PROBABLY not a few have been struck with the change manifest in our state conventions, both as regards their attendance and character. We began with mass conventions that became monstrous in size. Now they are delegated, and, on that account, are much smaller. Still, the falling off is too great to be accounted for by that reason alone, and it brings up the question as to whether this decrease is indicative of any real abatement of interest in the Sunday-school cause, or not. It is not likely that it indicates anything of the kind. State conventions, at one time, were all the kind of conventions that one could attend at all, and people who wanted to learn anything were compelled to go to them. Now, there are district conventions, county conventions, and local institutes doing the work much more thoroughly and satisfactorily than a state convention could do, and, on account of this local instruction, many no longer feel a necessity for traveling inconvenient distances, and spending considerable time at a state convention. Then, too, at first, every one went to learn what to do, and how to do it. The questions discussed were the A. B. C. of the Sunday-school alphabet. Now, the enquiry touches not methods of work so much as entrance into knowledge. Taking it altogether, there is no doubt that the Sunday-school cause is moving on.

OFTEN we have had occasion to regret that we can not respond to the appeals for aid that come to us from the grasshoppered districts and from frontier, destitute schools. The churches have done nobly in their efforts to relieve the physical wants occasioned by the winged destruction that has visited some of our western states; but few, however, seem to realize the spiritual destitution that just as surely follows such a visitation, and that just as much needs help. The following letter is only a sample of others that have come to us, and we hope that its publication will stir the hearts of those in our more favored Sunday-schools so that they will come to the assistance of those who are trying to do so much with so little:

FAIRBURY, JEFFERSON CO., NEB., May 28, 1875.

Mr. Editor:—We have commenced a Sunday-school here, and have upwards of thirty children—but nothing else. We have nothing to keep up any interest but our Testaments, and but few of them. We want a few of your questions if you can *donate* them to us. We live in the most infested grasshopper district of Southern Nebraska. Our Sabbath-school is located on the Little Blue River six miles north-west of Fairbury. We had a Sabbath-school last summer, and during the whole four months had not one Sunday-school book, nor even a paper or a singing book, etc. W. H. C.

They put their own needs usually in the following order: TEACHER and lesson papers, singing books, papers, library books. Who will send the latter, and who will contribute to send the former?

To the critics of our Sunday-school hymns and music we commend the curious fact that they are vastly more effective than the most unobjectionable lyrics of the church. They touch the heart as Watts and Wesley and Montgomery never have done. What can they say when in such a revival as that in Scotland and England they accomplish what the standard hymns and tunes never did? Let them read the following from a Scotch paper and then tell us their minds about it. Perhaps Duncan Cameron, of the *Interior*, will be the first to speak:

In one short half-year a set of hymns and tunes have sprung to a place which even the songs of Burns hardly reached in their palmiest days. You hear them in drawing rooms, in workshops, in dressmakers' rooms, in Sunday-schools, and at prayer-meetings; you hear them hummed by the

thoughtless *gamin*, and accompanied with the concertina by the itinerant street-singer; the fisherman in his boat, the plowman in the field, the mother lulling her infant, all resort to them; north and south, east and west, nothing is so popular as Sankey's hymns. Apart from its religious significance, this is a remarkable phenomenon in an intellectual and social point of view. What a power must there be in any set of songs that acquire so wide and so sudden a popularity!

A PAPER that has a genius for blundering, a short time ago quoted a paragraph from this journal as coming from the "*National Sunday School—Times*"! Since then we have been badly mixed up. We don't exactly know who we are; but have finally come to the conclusion that in the pressure of this conjunction, we must have lost half of our identity, and acquired a new moiety in place of it, and that the name of the one who edits the new hybrid must be——Ba-zard. Now if some enterprising publisher, desirous of starting a new Sunday-school periodical, can only find the other two halves and secure *them* as an editor, his success is assured. But there are so few, now-a-days, that want to start a Sabbath-school paper, that we fear they will remain forever unemployed.

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

OBJECTION has been made to the Sabbath-school because it is "a failure." Now we have the more cogent one that it makes the youngsters "know more than their fathers." The latter exception is taken by "An Old Fogy" in the *Sunday School Companion*, whose designation of himself that paper does not feel at liberty to contradict. It however, adds: "It is not so unfortunate for youngsters to know more than their fathers as for fathers to know less than their youngsters. The fathers should go to Sabbath-school." That is a fact. And they shall have a teacher—if we have to get one of those "youngsters" to take the class.——Madame Necker once enforced the necessity of reverence in religious instruction by saying: "Religion will never assume its most sacred aspect to young people unless the very teaching of it is a mode of worship." That sentiment we most heartily believe in, but we just as heartily believe in the apparently un-reverential way taken by Rev. J. Hyatt Smith when he sat down to teach his first class—boys belonging to the order of the "Red Flannel Shirt." They were a hard set who came to Sunday-school only to see how much they could annoy their teacher and how quick they could drive him away. In his first session with them he never opened the Bible, but commenced: "Well, fellows, did you have a good time last night? I always used to—remember all about it—I know you just enjoyed yourselves." The superintendent happened to hear this remarkable exordium, and inwardly groaning, turned away. But the thirteen boys in that class joined the church some months afterwards.——All the irreverence in Sunday-school, by the way, is not confined to the irrepressibly active little folks. A. L. Vail, in the *Standard*, referring to that prop of saintly decorum, the "Old People's Bible Class," says: "We have seen a half-dozen dear, disorderly, aged saints in a front corner, demoralize an entire school."——Dr. Hall does not favor preaching special sermons to young men, nor even to children. In relation to the latter this is what he says: "Instead of singling them out and giving them a surfeit on an exceptional day, it is better to put an incident, an anecdote into each sermon, and so put it that the children shall feel that they are not forgotten." A regular crumb from the table is better than nothing, but in addition to this, occasionally we would like to see the

children get a good, square meal. Just now it is neither crumb nor surfeit. Their diet is thinner than that of Oliver Twist.——*The National Baptist* gives a good answer to the question: "What is the first duty of the minister and the Sunday-school teacher?" Its response is: "To feed his church or his class would be the natural reply. Not so; he has another and earlier duty. It is *to feed himself*." If he neglects that he will soon lose all spiritual vitality. One must keep the reservoir full if he would continually draw from it. Said Horace Mann: "No one can teach well who does not teach out of a well."——Mr. Moody has suggested to our English friends a novel way of getting children interested in the lesson. His recommendation is: "Question them and write down their answers. They will all want to see their own answers. Mr. Moody has not studied child nature in vain. Older people take to print.——Sermons to children, we want it understood, are no modern idea. They used to be preached oftener than they are now. Dr. Hurst, in his *History of Rationalism*, mentions the fact that in the days succeeding Luther, at one time there were fifteen hundred sermons prepared for the young, and directed solely against Calvinism. And such succulent, juicy affairs they were!——Rev. Thomas Street says in the *Illustrated Christain Weekly:* "There is as much difference between a lesson aptly taught and one that is dull and prosy, as there is between the light wholesome loaf which the careful housewife prepares, and the heavy, soggy, sour bread which disgusts the appetite." And how few "careful housewives" there are!—— An eminent minister recommends that cards be handed to each one in the church with the question printed thereupon: "Will you teach in the Sabbath-school, gather in children, or be a scholar?" In case of a refusal to do either he next commends the following out of 2 Thess. 3: 14.——Vincent enforces the necessity of greater preparation for the class by the narration of the following incident: "A stammering grócery clerk whose employer was both miserly and dishonest, said to him one day, 'D-d-do you w-w-want to know how you c-c-can sell twice as much oil-oil as you do?' 'Yes,' said his employer, eagerly, 'how is it?' 'Fi-fi-fill up your m-m-measures.'" The application of course is obvious. If teachers want to increase their custom, they must *fill up their measures!*

Sunday School Work.

A Missionary of the American Sunday School Union found it about useless in certain parts of Kentucky to appeal for aid in starting Sabbath-schools. The great Louisville Public Library Lottery had been before him and absorbed all the benevolence of the country. One little village alone sent five hundred dollars to that swindle, and other places, he writes, forwarded to it all the money that could be raised above what was required to procure the bare necessaries of life. Of course, people could not be generous after such self-sacrifice as that. But wait till their returns come in!—— Great improvements are contemplated in the Chautauqua grounds this season. James Vick, the celebrated florist, has in charge the floral adornments; the Park of Palestine is to be rejuvenated and made better; a section of an Egyptian pyramid is to be erected; a tabernacle is to be built and properly furnished; and an Oriental dwelling, with housekeeping implements, is to be one of the attractions. The object lessons are to be more numerous than last year, and of themselves worth a journey to see.——The new Bethany Sunday-school building at Philadelphia will accommodate about

3,000 scholars. There are 27 class-rooms, which become a part of the main room by lowering or raising the glass doors; in all there are 42 class-rooms; in the basement is a dispensary for the sick, a reading room and free library; and a commodious kitchen and dining room. Dumb waiters are connected with the rooms above, so that any class, or several classes, can have a reunion and refreshments, and still be by themselves. The Sunday-school cause is indebted to Mr. John Wannamaker for this exemplar building. Mr. Wannamaker spends the summer in Europe. Bethany's farewell to him was quite touching.——The Sabbath-school of the Congregational church at Springfield, Mass., has now a room on the radiating plan, and has, or is to have, a blackboard for each class, swinging on pivot hinges, so as to be folded back out of the way when not wanted. Good idea. The blackboard is more of a necessity to the teacher than to the superintendent.———Mr. Smeltz, of Baltimore, stated at the International Convention, that more children attend Sunday-school in that city than can be found in both its public and private schools, and that nearly every Hebrew and colored child are to be found in the Sabbath-school.———Rev. A. G. Haygood, D. D., has resigned his position as Associate Missionary Secretary of the Southern Methodist church, in order to devote his entire time to the duties of Sunday-school Secretary—a post that he has filled for some time now with great acceptance. The Southern field is now opening so well that there is work for half a dozen energetic Sunday-school secretaries.———Vincent has been promoted. He has been elected to, and and accepted the position of Superintendent of the Plainfield M. E. Sunday-school. We warn him that at last he has got into a place that is going to test his capacity.———The *Congregationalist* has taken to illustrating its Sunday-school column with cuts. The first one is the face of Henry Clay Trumbull.——

For some months now we have had a regular visitor in the *Augsburg Sunday School Teacher*, published by the Lutheran denomination, and edited by Rev. F. W. Conrad and Prof. V. L. Conrad. It is a credit both to the publishers and the editors, and if it is patronized by the Lutheran teachers as it should be, has an ample field open for it. It takes its name from the Augsburg Confession.———Our California friends need to look after two places in their state. One is Graniteville, in Nevada Co. A friend writes us from there: "No Sunday-school or Sunday-school superintendent in this place. Eight licensed bars fill their places." The other is Concord, in Contra Costa Co. We hear from that: "This place boasts of a fine school-house, two hotels, two general stores, one grocery store, one millinery establishment, *nine saloons*, but *no church*, *no Sunday-school*, *no morals*." Now there is a chance for thorough missionary work.———A Southern superintendent, writing to the *Sunday School Magazine*, shows what one must do in certain localities, in order to succeed in carrying on a Sabbath-school, by epitomizing what *he* has to do. He says: "I am superintendent, teacher, secretary, librarian, leader of the singing, sexton, and general horse and mule-hitcher." The last is no unimportant duty. And his school lives, though everybody thought it would die. It don't die because he *won't* die.———At Baltimore they had an "Old Guard" of semi-centennial servants in the Sunday-school—eleven in all. We give here their names and length of service:

Amos Tappan, Massachusetts,	58	years.
Aaron Coe, New Jersey,	57	"
Wm. Woodward, Maryland,	56	"
Dr. T. B. Sargent, Maryland,	56	"
Nelson Kingsbury, Penn.,	55	"
B. W. Chidlaw, Ohio,	55	"
Alden Baker, Maine,	52	"
Jas. W. Weir, Pennsylvania,	52	"
M. Hunter, Illinois,	52	"
Rev. W. H. Pearne, N. Jersey,	52	"
Peter A. Voorhees, N. Jersey,	50	"

Dr. John Hall, it is said, is down for a course of Sunday-school lectures at Yale Theological Seminary.———After Chautauqua this year comes "The Lake Bluff Sunday School Assembly," just a few miles north of Chicago, on the lake, and under the supervision of the same Sunday-school Director. Its time is Aug. 24 to Sep. 2. Western men, please make a memorandum of that fact.

FOREIGN.

THE "Edinburgh series of Bible Lessons" has every alternate lesson in the Old Testament. As that was more or less the custom also in England, our English brethren, as well as ourselves, gave up a point or two when they consented for 1876 to alternate quarterly instead of weekly.———Our London namesake has changed its appearance for the better, and has remodeled its make up, remitting some of its old departments to its new and excellent coadjutor, the *Sunday School Chronicle*. The latter is a weekly paper, in form and size something like our *Sunday School Times*, and is bright and newsy, and has a man at the helm who has real editorial knack and ability.———A "Teacher *without* a Degree" writes to the London *Sunday School Teacher* that he has in his class of eighteen young men "one who has passed his first L. L. B. examination, another, Oxford Local, another, Cambridge Local and College of Preceptors, while three or four others have passed their Pharmaceutical and Admiralty examinations." No wonder he asks: "What of the future?" Well, as nothing seems to ail the rest of the class, let him stand his ground.———Mr. Moody, when he was in Liverpool, addressed one of the largest children's meetings that was ever assembled in the world. There were 15,000 little ones present. And the singing! No one can imagine the uplifting power of a multitude of children's voices who has not heard them sing. Now that Maj. Cole has reinforced Mr. Moody, we see that special children's services are being held of which he has charge, and they bid fair to be the rival in numbers of Mr. Moody's monster gatherings.———To Gloucester is given the credit of having the best Sunday-school building in England. As it was there the Sunday-school was first cradled, it ought to excel in everything connected with it. Certainly the mother ought to do better than any one else for her own child.———The first edition of *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress* was printed for "Nath. Ponder at the *Peacock*, in the *Poultrey*, near Cornhill, 1678." But one copy of the original edition is known to be in existence, and that belongs to Mr. H. S. Holford. Mr. Elliot Stock. (62 Paternoster Row, London,) has just issued a fac-simile of this remaining copy, so that all who are that way inclined can satiate themselves with the infelicities of the printing of two-hundred years ago.——Mr. Moody was asked by a preacher in London to put the gospel he preached into print, so that all might know what it was. Mr. Moody replied that it had been in print for a long time, and referred the enquirer to Is. 53! That was entirely satisfactory.———They must have wearisome Sunday-school talkers in England also, for Secretary Hartley made a vigorous protest against the long winded "addresses" made by superintendents at the close of school. The result of the protest was a lively discussion in the *Sunday School Chronicle*. These talkers never do like to be choked off.———In the same paper another debate has been going on over children's services, inaugurated by the account given by Dr. McAuslane, of the success and interest that have attended such services in his

church. To a far away observer it looks as if the Dr.'s simple statement of successful experiment stood unmoved by all the theoretical objections brought to bear against it.——The Marie-la-bonne Sunday-school, of Portsmouth, has presented to the railway station of that place, a copy of *Cassell's Illustrated Bible*, bound in Russia, and printed on toned paper. And this magnificent gift is not intended for patrician handling, but went immediately to the third-class waiting room. That was a noble donation, and just hit the mark.——"Flower Shows" for the benefit of Sunday-schools have been introduced at Atherton Road, Stratford. The interest taken in this innocent exhibition by the scholars was unbounded. The pecuniary returns were quite satisfactory, while not the least of the good results flowing from it was the increased love of flowers and their cultivation. Now, what if it had been a fair, with a lottery or a grab-bag!——In Scotland they have tried the prize system in getting children into the Sabbath-school. That, after a while, has its embarrassments. One little fellow who had learned the ropes, when invited in, promptly replied: "What size o' a bag d'ye gie?" He had got the idea that it was a matter for competitive bidding.——The Sunday-school has had a hard time of it in Germany. It has been denounced as an evil, and the teachers in it have been subject to treatment that almost amounts to persecution. Now, however, the prospects are more hopeful. The present Prussian Minister of Religion has addressed circulars commending the Sunday-school to all the synods, and, for the first time, one of those influential bodies has spoken unqualifiedly in its favor. From this time we may expect a rapid growth in Sunday-school matters in Germany. ——There has been a wonderful change in the Fiji Islands. Forty years ago they were wont to drink blood from human skulls, strangle widows and children, and bury alive the aged and helpless. Now 53,000 children attend Sabbath-school, and, it is said that the drum-beat for family worship rolls clear round the shores of that southern sea, obeyed by every family.——The Chinese are asking for a Sunday-school paper! At Foochow they have already advanced to review exercises and had "Elliptical Readings." Are they taking the "cue" from us, or we from them? They use a white board instead of a black one, and draw with Chinese ink and a coarse brush, instead of crayons.

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—In the Sunday-school of Emmanuel Chapel, New York, the librarian has got things down to a pretty fine point. He has divided his books into five classes: 1.—Those suitable for persons from 8 to 11 years of age; 2.—Those suitable for those from 12 to 14; 3.—Those from 15 to 17; 4.—Those from 18 to 25; 5.—Books for teachers. Just how he is enabled unerringly to decide which book belongs to which class, or how his system provides for those who are old beyond their years we can not say, but it is a good idea to have the books so classified that the "infants" can not march off with those fit only for those in the intermediate department, or the latter be liable to have their craniums crushed with a tome meant only for the most muscular of adults.

—Every one has admired the ready, off-hand, practical, and witty answers that some of our Sunday-schools are capable of giving when put up without preparation to answer the interrogatories

that come out of the "Question Drawer" at conventions. But few men are capable, however, for this trying ordeal, and so not infrequently this exercise is an unhappy failure. At the Wayne Baptist Institute, held at Farmington, they avoided all chance of disaster by distributing the questions to the speakers the day before they were to be answered. Instead of broken, incoherent remarks, they all had something to say that was of real information and that was to the point. Others may well take a leaf out of their experience.

—D.C.Durfee writes us from Gloversville, New York, that, as a method of raising money for Sabbath-school expenses, he has introduced the plan of having each member of the Sunday-school say what they will contribute for that purpose each month, and then he holds him responsible for his pledge. So far, he says, the plan has worked well, and wants to know what we think of it, and whether there is a better way. To the latter we unhesitatingly say Yes. The better way is to have the church provide for the expenses of the Sunday-school, and let the contributions of the children go toward benevolent objects. Selfishness could be no more strongly encouraged than to have the children spend their money only upon themselves. In default, however, of being able to get the church to do its duty, the method is an admirable one, chiefly because it fixes the income of the school at a definite sum, and the outgo can be regulated accordingly. A weekly pledge might be better still—it would not be so liable to be forgotten.

—There are many teachers who would like to take a Normal course if they only knew how. The difficulties of such a course are not so insurmountable as many suppose. The new Normal class books are helping to remove them and aid those undertaking such a study very much. Dr. Wm. A. Niles gives in the *Presbyterian at Work* two lists of subjects, which we here subjoin, and which were successfully completed by the Normal class made up of the teachers and the young people of his Sunday-school. While Dr. Niles had charge of the class and conducted the drills and the reviews, yet the subjects usually were taught by the teachers themselves:

I.

1. Number and names of the books of the Bible.
2. Authorship of the Bible.
3. Manuscripts and versions.
4. Preservation of the Bible.
5. History of the English Bible.
6. Biblical chronology.
7. Lands of the Bible.
8. Manners and customs in Bible times.
9. Manners and customs (continued).
10. The Sunday-school teacher out of school.
11. Review.
12. Review.
13. Written examination.

II.

1. Questions on Bible history from Genesis to Esther.
2. Questions on Bible history from Job to Malachi.
3. Jewish Feasts.
4. Common mistakes of Sunday-school teachers.
5. Map drawing, and locating places.
6. Malachi to Matthew.
7. Art of securing attention.
8. Art of questioning.
9. Outlines of the life of St. Paul.
10. The Jewish tabernacle.
11. Review.
12. Review.
13. Written examination.

LITERATURE.

IT was a happy thought that came to the Sunday-school Secretaries, Tyler, Vincent, Trumbull, and Randolph, to agree upon a plan of elementary study for Sabbath-school teachers, and then publish Normal Class text books developing the plan laid down. The Baptist manual has already passed under review. The Presbyterians have issued theirs, and it now lies before us having the title *Preparing to Teach*. The work has been divided among competent hands. Dr. John Hall treats of *The Evidences of Christianity;* Rev. E. P. Humphrey of *Ceremonial Institutes;* Rev. Wm. Henry Green, D. D. LL. D., of *Bible History, Geography*, and *Archæology;* Prof. Francis L.

Patton, D. D., gives a *Summary of Christian Doctrine;* and, as is eminently fitting, it is left to J. Bennet Tyler to take up the topic, *How to Teach the Bible.* It is quite evident all through this volume that its contributors kept steadily before them the fact that they were to furnish their constituents with information, and not merely to perform some fine writing. The book is consequently just fitted for its purpose. It is full of facts that teachers ought to know. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. $1.75.

By the will of the late Hon. Richard P. Fletcher, of Boston, a fund was provided, from the proceeds of which biennially a prize of $500 was to be offered for the best prize essay, setting forth truths and reasoning calculated to counteract those influences that tend to draw professed Christians into fatal conformity with the world. There are few but that will sympathize with the motive of this bequest. The trouble with most of the books that treat of religious matters is that they are so utterly worldly unwise, and have as little aptness in their application as the tract on "*The Sin of Dancing*" that once was handed to a man without legs. The first product of this prize is a book by Rev. D. W. Faunce, entitled *The Christian in the World.* It is a book of such plain, practical common sense, such a cogent application of the gospel to the common affairs of life, that we would like to put it into the hands of every business man. And he would be likely to appreciate it, for it is written with a due appreciation of the temptations that beset him. He would not be likely-to toss it aside, saying: "That may be good gospel, but it isn't business." We hope the Fletcher Prize may always be able to land as good a book as this. Boston: Roberts Brothers. Chicago: Keen, Cooke, & Co. $1.50.

Heaven and Hell is the well known work in which Swedenborg relates his visions of both departments of the next world. Those who have faith in the reality of the visions of the Swedish seer will read with avidity this modern Apocalypse and welcome all its details as literally true. Others, who think that the author was under a hallucination as to his intercourse with angels and his visions of heaven and hell, will yet take pleasure in many philosophic discriminations and suggestive utterances. For Swedenborg was a rare thinker and of original merit, and he has impressed modern theology more than many suppose. His theories have modified various presentations of the Trinity, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the future life. Both heretics and the orthodox have owed something to his forcible arguments on difficult subjects, even while they discarded his claims of supernatural vision. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. Chicago: Emerson & Kennedy.

Along about Christmas time will come the puzzle of selecting appropriate books for children. People then will wonder and wonder what they shall get, and finally rush off in desperation and buy something they are afterwards sorry to see about the house. Let all those who annually are stared out of countenance by this perplexity stick a pin down against that time to help them remember that *The Man in the Moon and Other People*, by R. W. Raymond, is full of those quaint stories that children love; that they are most admirably told, and that in all their fun and quaintness there is more healthy, moral sentiment than is apt to be in those books that have their "Moral" explicitly set forth at the end. Elegantly bound and illustrated. New York: J. B. Ford & Co. Chicago: Keen, Cooke, & Co. $2.00.

Those who are interested in Kindergarten methods will welcome Heinrich Hoffman's *Kindergarten Toys* and *How to use them*, published by E. Steiger, New York. There are but few who know how much the child can be instructed in its amusements. This will aid those who have a desire to learn about it. 25 cents.

What Might Have Been Expected, by Frank R. Stockton, will be recognized by many as a serial that graced the pages of *St. Nicholas.* It tells how a brother and sister took upon themselves the support of an old colored woman rather than let her go to the poor-house. It is instructive, and amusing, and stimulating—all three—to see what devices they follow out, what funny things happen, and how, under all discouragements, they adhere to their purpose. The task undertaken by the two children is made to appear so attractive that we fear that there will hardly be old colored women enough to supply the demand that is likely to arise for them. New York: Dodd & Mead.

A Minister, as much or more than other men, ought to have his work systematically laid out, and a careful record of it kept. Much time will necessarily be lost when it is not so methodically measured. One of the best means to this end that we have seen is the help that is given in *The Pastor's Complete Hand Book and Register*, by Rev. F. D. Dickinson. It has blanks for a record of church membership, funeral services, occasional services, marriages, visiting list, and "memoranda"; forms for license to preach, for traveling letter, ecclesiastical council, letter of dismission, church book of record; selections of Scripture for invitation, warning, for the sick, and for funerals; and burial and marriage services, together with some standard hymns and tunes. Chicago: C. R. Blackall. $1.50.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Abraham Lincoln: His Life, Public Services, Death, and Great Funeral Cortege, with a History and Description of the National Lincoln Monument, by John Carroll Power. Springfield, Ill.: Edwin A. Wilson & Co.

The Berean Question Book; for 1875. New York: Nelson & Phillips. Chicago: Hitchcock & Walden.

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OLD TESTAMENT PREDICTIONS OF CHRIST.

BY REV. WM. W. PATTON, D. D.

SUCH PROPHECIES TO HAVE BEEN EXPECTED.—It is scarcely supposable that there should not have been numerous and explicit predictions of the coming Saviour, long before his actual advent. The very conception of Christianity implies that it was in the plan of God from the beginning, so that intimations of the fact might be expected during the introductory stages. Strange, indeed, would it have been, had no hint been dropped of that incarnation and redemption which were to be the most impressive and instructive of all the divine manifestations. The grand purpose of mercy could not be so long hidden. God's love must in some way announce itself. Moreover, if God saw that four thousand years were requisite, in the working of a moral system into which sin had entered, ere "the fullness of time" could come for the appearance of his Son on earth, clothed in our nature, it was natural that the darkness of so long a period should be relieved by occasional gleams of light. And these would as naturally increase, like the growing dawn of a coming day, as the august event drew near, and the Sun of Righteousness was about to flood the world with beams of truth and love, till desire should be earnest and expectation eager in those gifted with spiritual discernment and prophetic foresight. And so Peter tells the Christians of the first century, on whom the Sun had risen, that "of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

RUMORED AMONG THE HEATHEN.—Some vestiges of the primitive faith remained among the heathen nations, having descended by tradition; and they were also communicated by occasional contact with the worshipers of the true God. Thus expectations of a great teacher and deliverer were handed down. Possibly they came in part from dim memories of the earliest prophecy of the Messiah (Gen 3: 15), made when God said to the serpent, after the Fall, respecting the seed of the woman: "It shall bruise thy head." Perhaps, also, they accompanied the transmission from generation to generation of the divine institution of bloody sacrifices for sin. They may have gone, too, with Abraham, on his

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visit to Egypt, based on the promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," which pointed to Christ; or they may have been carried thither by Jacob and his sons subsequently. The Jews in time had much intercourse with other people, through war and commerce, by captivity and emigration, so that their peculiar ideas and hopes became known in every direction. Thus before the birth of Christ the hope of some kind of a Messiah was widespread among the heathen. In the writings of Plato, Socrates remarks: "We must wait, then, till one shall teach us our duty to the gods and to men," and Alcibiades asks, "When will that time come, and who will be that teacher? Most happy should I be to see this man, whoever he is." Tacitus and Suetonius also mention the rumor as extensively prevailing, supported by the voice of antiquity and by sacred writings, that there should arise in Judea a power which should have the empire of the world. Such an expectation also explains the star seen in the east, and the understanding of the omen by the Magi, who followed its guidance till they reached Bethlehem, and found the royal babe of whom they were in search.

AFFIRMED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. —Continual reference is made by the writers of the New Testament to the prophecies respecting Christ in the Old Testament. Every reader will call to mind their phrases, "It is written," "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets," etc. It is plain that they appealed to recognized predictions on which an argument could be based. It is also evident that they were authorized to take this view by Jesus himself. Thus he said to his opponents: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." (John 5: 45, 46.) So also in the account of the interview with the two disciples at Emmaus, we read: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24: 27.) At the meeting with the apostles, the same evening, he said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved (the) Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day." (Vs. 44–46.) Upon this instruction the apostles acted, and, on the day of Pentecost, Peter declared that David had predicted the coming, the descent, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus. "Being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up (the) Christ, to sit on his throne, he, seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ." (Acts 2: 30, 31.) Also in the temple, after the healing of the lame man, he argued in favor of Jesus as the Christ, from what "Moses truly said unto the fathers," and from the declarations of "all the prophets, from Samuel and those that follow after." (Acts 3: 22–24.) Paul, in his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, appealed similarly to "the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day," to "the promise which was made unto the fathers," and to what is "written in the second Psalm" and "in another Psalm." (Acts 13: 27–37.) When he made his celebrated argument before Agrippa, he said: "I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying that none other things than that which the prophets and Moses did say should come;" and he wound up with the bold and solemn appeal: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." (Acts 26: 22, 27.) And when as a prisoner he reached Rome, he sent for the Jews, and "expounded and testified the kingdom of

God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." (Acts 28: 23.)

CORRESPONDING EXPECTATIONS OF THE JEWS.—All this accorded, to a certain extent, with the current expectations of the Jews. In their subject-condition under their Roman conquerors, they were anxiously awaiting the promised Deliverer. They knew that the time indicated by Daniel (9: 25, 26) for the coming of "the Messiah the Prince" had arrived, and the nation was full of excitement. This accounts for the appearance of impostors, or false Messiahs, at that period, and for the readiness with which John the Baptist was heard by all classes, when he suddenly began to preach repentance as a preparation for the approaching kingdom, of which he declared himself the predicted forerunner. (Matt. 3: 1–3.) Some even thought that he might be the Christ. (John 1: 19–25.) And when he began his ministry, no Jew, however learned, pretended to question whether there were prophecies of a Messiah, but only whether they had a fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. (John 4: 25; 7: 25–31, 40–43.) It is quite too late, therefore, for skeptics to contend that the Old Testament contains no predictions of a personal Messiah. The chief priests and scribes, who were students of their Scriptures, had no doubts on that point, however mistaken they may have been as to the manner in which he would appear, and the purpose for which he would come.

CHARACTER OF THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.—The predictions are so numerous and varied that they must be grouped in order to profitable study. As to their form, they may be divided into the indirect and the direct, or the typical and the verbal. The typical set forth the coming Saviour, by prophetic facts, rites, and institutions, which were symbols of his official character and work. Thus the institution of animal sacrifices, in which the forgiveness and acceptance of a sinner was conditioned on the death of a victim, and on the shedding and sprinkling of blood, was a prefiguring of the atoning death of Christ; as we are taught everywhere in the New Testament. The Passover lamb was a striking type of Christ, whose blood secured a greater deliverance than was wrought for the Israelites in Egypt. The whole temple service was full of types of his redemption, the full meaning of which could only be learned when he should come. The Jewish nation, as under a theocratic government, was treated by the inspired writers as representative of Christ's kingdom; David and Solomon, as monarchs, were made types of Christ's kingly office; Jerusalem, the capital, became in prophetic usage, a type of the redeemed church and of its heavenly abode; and the temple stood as a sign of the coming incarnation. As the ages went on, the prophecies were more and more plainly uttered in words.

When we study the direct prophecies they naturally arrange themselves around the salient points in the person and history of Jesus Christ. And here it may be well to remark that the titles, the Messiah and the Christ, mean the same thing; the Messiah, being the Hebrew, or Old Testament word, and the Christ being the Greek, or New Testament word for the Anointed One. As the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel were anointed with oil, to signify that they were divinely set apart for their official work, and might look for measures of the Holy Spirit to qualify them for it, so Jesus was especially set apart and qualified by the Holy Spirit for his three-fold office of Prophet, Priest, and King, and was thus emphatically the Anointed of God. This led to his being called in the prophetic writings, the Messiah.

PROPHECIES OF CHRIST'S DESCENT.—While the Old Testament made occasional allusion to the higher or divine nature of the Messiah, as in the title Immanuel, or God with us (Is. 7: 14),

and even by calling him God (Is. 9:6; Ps. 45:6) it more commonly referred to his human nature. In doing so it declared what his descent would be, so that the Jews learned that he would be of royal lineage, and a direct descendant of David. Thus Isaiah wrote (11:1): "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse (David's father) and a Branch shall grow out of his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." See also the tenth verse, and the whole chapter. Jeremiah also said (23:5, 6): "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth * * * and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." Compare also 35:15. David himself is represented as ruling again in Christ. Ezek. 34:23, 24. Hence when Jesus allowed those who believed in him to call him "the Son of David," everybody understood that this meant that he claimed to be the Messiah. Examine carefully on this point Matt. 9:27; 12:23; 21:9; 22:41–45, and it will be seen how well known these prophecies were. Read also Luke 1:30–33.

PROPHECIES OF CHRIST'S BIRTH.—These marked out Bethlehem as his birth-place, where David, his royal ancestor had been born. This was so plain from the words in Micah 5:2, that when Herod asked the chief priests and scribes where the Christ was to be born, we read: "And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel." Matt. 2:4–6. Jesus was actually born there, but as his parents lived in Nazareth, where he grew up, he was called Jesus of Nazareth. This perplexed those who did not know of his real birth-place, and yet thought, from his miracles and teaching, that he must be the Messiah. John 7:41–43. It was also predicted by Isaiah (7:14) in connection with an earlier typical event, that he should be born of a virgin; and the passage is quoted by Matthew (1:22, 23) as fulfilled by the birth of Jesus of the Virgin Mary.

PROPHECIES OF CHRIST'S OFFICIAL WORK.—These were sometimes in general terms, as in the eleventh and forty-second chapters of Isaiah, where he is described as the universal comforter and helper, in whom Jew and Gentile should alike trust, and who would bring to end war and strife, sin and misery. More definitely he was described by Moses (Deut. 18:15–19) as "the prophet like unto me," and as the final culmination of the succession of prophets; the prophetic order being typical of him as the grandest of all teachers. Hence the Jews often referred to him as "that prophet" (John 1:21; 7:40), and Peter claimed that the prophecy meant Jesus. Acts 3:22, 23. The Jewish priesthood was also a type of Christ, and especially the high priest; a subject to which the Epistle to the Hebrews is largely devoted, from the third to the tenth chapter. The book of Leviticus might thus be said to be a continuous prophecy of the Messiah in his priestly work, by the typical meaning of its altar, victims, priests, veil, most holy place, mercy seat, and other apartments of the tabernacle. But a peculiarity of his priesthood is indicated in Ps. 110:4, which declares that he was not to be a hereditary, Aaronic priest, but one after "the order of Melchisedek," standing by himself as both king and priest; on which see the seventh chapter of Hebrews. His grand peculiarity was to be that he would offer himself as the antitypal victim, making the needed atonement for the world's sin, which all previous sacrifices had foreshadowed. The entire fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is devoted to this impressive statement, and has gained for that writer the name of "the evangelical prophet." It pictures the rejected, suffering Messiah, whom the Jews knew not how to reconcile with the conquering Messiah elsewhere portrayed. The passage is too long and

too familiar to be quoted. The prophecies are many and protracted which describe the Messiah in his office of King. The second Psalm gives prominence to this conception, as do also the 45th, 72nd, and 110th Psalms, and the prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel.

PROPHECIES OF CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION.—These were, in some respects, minute. Isaiah (53: 1–12) describes his innocence and yet his condemnation as a criminal, his patience and meekness, his violent death among transgressors, and yet his connection with the rich in his burial. This was the passage which Philip explained to the perplexed Ethiopian eunuch. Acts 8: 27–35. Daniel predicted the year as well as the fact of his death. Dan. 9: 26. The paschal lamb, as a type, indicated the occasion upon which the antitype would meet his death, even at the great Passover feast, while the peculiarity that not a bone of that lamb was to be broken, pointed to a special exemption from outrage which the body of Jesus enjoyed. The Psalms in which the persecuted David stands as a type of the Messiah (the 22nd, 40th, and 41st) offer many words which have their further and higher fulfillment in the sufferings of Jesus, in the particular forms of shame and anguish which attended his death; while Zechariah alludes to his being "pierced" (12: 10); and to his betrayal for a price which went to the potter (11: 12, 13). In Psalm 16: 9, 10, we have the prophecy of his resurrection, as explained by Peter, in Acts 2: 25–31 and 13: 34–37.

PREDICTIONS OF CHRIST'S FINAL TRIUMPH.—The Old Testament prophecies reach beyond the sacrificial death of the Messiah, and foretell the triumph of his kingdom in Psalms 2, 45, 72, and 110, and in Is. 9: 6, 7; 42: 4; 53: 11, 12; 59: 19, 20, and all the last seven chapters, and in Dan. 2: 44; 7: 13. These assert that he will judge all his foes and will have an eternal dominion.

Volumes have been written on the various prophecies thus briefly sketched; but enough has been said to show how clearly they point to Jesus as the Christ of God, the Saviour of the world; how manifestly the Old and the New Testaments teach the same doctrine of redemption; and how plainly they are divinely inspired.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

BY PROF. E. H. MERRELL, OF RIPON COLLEGE.

OUR warrant for the use of the metaphor which is the title of this article, is the conversation of our Lord with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well; though variously in other Scriptures, especially in Isaiah (see chap. 45), we have waters to represent spiritual blessings, and in the famous text in the last chapter of the Bible we have the exact words, "water of life." The expression itself is delightful as we set it over against our unslaked thirsts of worldliness; for it suggests not refreshing alone, but the possibility of emerging out of our dying into triumphantly sustained living and blessedness. Life we love. "Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life," is a truth so potent that we believe it on the poor authority of Satan. Death we hate.

> "The weariest and most loathed worldly life
> Which age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
> Can lay on nature, is a paradise
> To what we fear of death."

The Water of Life is Christ; he "thought it not robbery" to make this claim for himself. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." To have Christ is to have life; not to have Christ is death. Under the figure of bread,

Christ says: "If any man shall eat of this bread he shall live forever;" to take him into our inward parts as the Water of Life is also to live forever. Christ in the soul's activities is the life of that soul. He carries life into all functions, as the blood carries life into the minutest parts of the body, and the body continues to live.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that Christ is related to our immortal life in only such a way as water is related to our bodily life. Christ is not only as much as water to our bodies, but he is greatly more. Both Christ and the water in Jacob's well are related to deep natural wants. To supply the bodily want of man, God has covered the most of the world with floods; to supply his spiritual want, he has flooded the spiritual world with his love in Christ. The rivers, the lakes, the mighty seas, are the symbol of his abounding and satisfying love. And both Christ and the water are also alike in this, that death ensues from lack of either. To be without water is to perish from thirst; to fail of Christ is to parch the tongue in spiritual torment. And yet further we see the likeness of the two; for each perfectly extinguishes the thirst to which the remedy is related. No bodily thirst was ever too pangful to find its anguish exactly met and extinguished with water; no unrest of the soul ever found Christ and wanted aught beside. Of that craving for which pilgrimage and penance can do nothing, Christ is the all-satisfaction. But at this point the likeness ends; and Christ did not fail to show the sinning woman of Sychar that the water which he could give was more than the water drawn from Jacob's deep well: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." We may name two points of superiority for the Water of Life, which are sufficiently obvious. And, first, the supply in Christ is inexhaustible. Jacob's well is very deep, hewn in the solid rock, but it is often dry. Or, if it did not dry, its waters must be taken again and again to keep the body in life. But Christ is a bubbling spring opened in the soul, and the spring never runs dry. This spring is connected with the great ocean supply and it is *living* within; we need not go far with the pitcher to draw. But, second, and more significant still: The Water of Life begets life. It is living not only in the sense that it does not fail, but also in the sense that it quickens into newness of life. And this is its distinguished superiority. The water of the well is related to a life already existing; by drinking often we may banish thirst and live for a little time, but we die at last in spite of all the water can do. But Christ comes to what is dead, implants a principle of life, and maintains it quickened and refreshed unto "everlasting life." In him is life and he bestows a life that does not die. The dead Sahara of our souls is covered with eternal bloom. "The seed is the word of God" is the other Scripture metaphor corresponding to this thought. The germ principle of holiness is planted in the dead soul, and the forces of the soul become life according to the principle of the germ. The soul grows up into everlasting life.

To complete what may here be said on this subject, let the thought be turned for a moment from the two kinds of water to the two kinds of thirst. As a matter of fact men live in the gratification of either a worldly or a spiritual thirst. They drink the water of the wells of this world or else the Water of Life. The one or the other they are accustomed to relish. How different the two thirsts! Different in their law, the one being that of self-gratification, and the other that of reason; different, also, in that the one is abnormal and the other normal. The inebriate has a thirst, but it is unnatural; the thirst for Christ is highest nature. Health and only health comes of gratifying it. But not to speak

of the law and nature, witness the unlikeness of the two thirsts in their relation to *satiety*. A thirst for this world is speedily sated, and then comes disgust. The drunkard loathes the cup which at the first was his exhilaration. The glutton, weary of the old, ever seeks new dainties. The voluptuary ransacks the world for new loves. The worshiper of mammon is crazed for a new source of gain, and, when found, loathes it for bringing new cares instead of blessedness. But the case is not so when we thirst for Christ, the Water of Life. The more we have the more we are capable of enjoying. The lip delights anew in the cup of salvation. The appetite is whetted for perpetual gratification. The spring bubbles up within us, a life-giving principle, a perpetual refreshing. With the world we have satiety ever—satisfaction never; with Christ we have satiety never, but satisfaction forever.

With such poor pleasure does the world tantalize us. It proffers a good it never can supply, and after our torture is complete, it passes away for every one. The world deceives and passes in invariable transitoriness. Not so Christ. "He is faithful that promised." He who in obedience to a thirst for Christ lays up treasures in heaven, at death just enters into full possession of fruition. Death establishes his title. He "shall never die."

To suggest anew the old question of wisdom, we might fairly ask: Which is it better to have, the water of the wells of this world, or the Water of Life? If a man should have the choice of two parcels of land, alike and equally valuable, except that the water of one is a filthy and failing pool, while that of the other is a living spring, he would not make a wise choice if he took the land with the pool. From the pool, himself, his children, and his cattle must drink in filth and disease. A malaria exhales from its bosom to poison the very air he breathes. From the spring is the cool draught which supplies refreshment unto life. But he who rejects Christ and thirsts for the world, accepts the parcel of land whose water is a stagnant pool.

THE RESCUED SABBATH.

BY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT.

NO institution has been more vigorously, more persistently, and more successfully lampooned than the Jewish Sabbath. The very word Sabbath has become odious in many minds, on account of its Jewish extraction and its Jewish character. Men in the Christian church, men respectably versed in the Bible, have grown up with the idea ineradicably fixed in their minds, that it was a day of gloom and of asceticism, a day of darkness if not of tears, a day on which laughter, merriment, gladness were forbidden—a day of bondage. The poor man who was stoned for picking up sticks on the Sabbath is re-executed every week for the benefit of assailants of the Sabbath, and the one solitary text in the Old Testament, in Isaiah, a text which is of doubtful interpretation, and which alone gives any kind of countenance to this lugubrious error, is made to do service on all occasions, by the more rigorous Sabbatarians, with a serene indifference to the general course of history, the general current of Jewish statute laws, and the general spirit of the teachings of both the Old Testament and New Testament on this subject.

When the Sabbath was instituted, whether at the creation or at the emancipation of Israel from Egypt, is an open and unsettled question. If earlier instituted it was at all events revived in the wilderness, and then first became a national observance. What was its

character? For this we must go to the fundamental law which ordained it, and that law we must read in the light of contemporaneous events. Israel was a nation of slaves, in an age of the world when Christian teaching and the general progress of humanity had not ameliorated slavery. Their labor knew no alleviation. The modern car driver knows no harder or more continuous labor. There was no recurring rest day; there were no holidays; the drudgery of the year knew no break. Slaves make the hardest task-masters, and the habits of service acquired in Egypt were likely to be perpetuated in Palestine. Moreover our own experience demonstrates that it is not enough to provide a permissive holiday. To be effectual the holiday must be recognized and enforced by legislation. If so now, much more so then. Among the first provisions of the fundamental law of the Jewish commonwealth, therefore, was a statute providing for a weekly holiday. Its character was indicated by its title; it was the Sabbath, the rest-day of the nation. It was indicated by the avowed reason for its establishment; on that day God rested from his work of creation. It was indicated by the very frame-work of the enactment: "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no work." All the rest of the statute was simply an enlargement of this prohibition, and extended it over the servant and the stranger. But nothing was said in this fundamental law as to religious service; nothing prohibiting innocent and healthful recreation; nothing of song, or laugh, or social conversation, or domestic festivities. Work was prohibited; and the day was holy to the Lord—this was all. And to the Jew, holiness to God meant, not a solemn bondage and a long-faced quietude; it meant joy and gladness, and feasting. Nehemiah interpreted aright the devout Jew's idea of a holy day: "This day is holy unto your God; mourn not, nor weep. * * * Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." The defender of Sabbath restriction will look in vain in the Old Testament for any justification of the popular but utterly unfounded notion that austerity was required, or was in fact maintained among the Jews, on their Sabbath. It was with them, and it was meant to be, the gladdest day of all the year, as it is to a large extent even among modern Jews. Walking, temperate festivities, singing, social converse, innocent and quiet recreations—these are nowhere forbidden in the Jewish law, and these were all maintained in point of fact in the Jewish life.

The prohibition of work was, however, enforced with rigor. Mercifully the first violator was stoned to death—mercifully I say, because severity is often mercy; and this one example sufficed. No other case of capital punishment for Sabbath violation is recorded in Bible history.

It was not and it is not in the nature of Pharisaism to understand such a day. Liberty and ceremonialism do not go well together. As the Pharisaic party increased in power and influence the Sabbath was more and more hedged about with absurd restrictions. Because Nehemiah had forbidden the carriage of commercial burdens on that day, all burden-bearing was forbidden. A Jew could not carry the mat which served him as both bed and chair, without reprobation, nor walk more than a specified number of yards, fixed by Rabbinical rule as a Sabbath day's journey, nor attend the sick for cure till after sunset. The Rabbinical books are full of puerile regulations respecting the Sabbath. You must not feed grain to your chickens, lest some should fall on the ground and germinate, which would be a kind of sowing, nor walk with nailed shoes across the grass, which would be a kind of threshing, nor catch a flea in your garments, which would be a kind of hunting.

These and like laws were probably confined practically to the high churchmen, whose burdens are always greater than their privileges; but they serve to show the bondage under which Christ found the people. The Sabbath was no longer a day of joy and gladness. Liberty is of the essence of rest; and the Sabbath was no longer a free day. Its divine purpose was forgotten; its divine uses were lost.

So Christ found the Sabbath perverted, prostituted, violated, in the name and with the sanctions of religion. What were his teachings? What his example?

Certainly he did not abolish the day; he did not strike it from the calendar; he did not rob the world of its rest day; he did not abate, by a single word, the legal sanctions to the prohibition: "In it thou shalt do no work." He is not recorded ever to have engaged in secular labor on that day, nor to have encouraged others in so doing. The disciples never fished on that day; neither he nor they ever took long journeys. He attended the synagogue services and took part in them. He declared emphatically that the Sabbath was made for man, and by that declaration took it out of the list of merely Jewish institutions and gave it a larger significance. That which was said of the Sabbath could not be said of the temple, nor of the system of sacrifice, nor of the Passover. The Sabbath is no Jew's day; it is man's day; it belongs to the whole human race.

But he put the stamp of his disapproval once and forever on the Pharisaic Sabbath, which modern Pharisees have sometimes attempted to restore; and he restored the ancient Jewish Sabbath, which modern Pharisees have generally misinterpreted. He walked on the Sabbath with his disciples, and justified their plucking and eating of the wheat; he cured on the Sabbath, openly, publicly, frequently; he attended social gatherings on the Sabbath, and, at least in one instance, a gathering of considerable pomp and circumstance, at the house of a man of wealth. And he declared his right to work his works of love because God, his Father, is ever working the works of love; and the right of all men to use the Sabbath and to rebel against the bondage which made the soul subordinate to the institution created for its development.

It seems to me that we need nothing so much just now, in solving the Sabbath question of to-day, as to go back to the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament, to inquire what was the Sabbath as God instituted it in the wilderness, and Christ restored it in the Holy Land, and to endeavor to reinstate that Bible Sabbath—just that, nothing more, nothing less. Conservatives will think this too radical, and radicals will think it too conservative. We shall be told on the one side, that by admitting the Sabbath to be what God made it, not a fast day but a feast day, we shall be inaugurating a movement which, however right in itself, is dangerous in its results; and we shall also be told, on the other side, that by endeavoring to prevent Sabbath labor by Sabbath legislation, we are violating the liberty of man, and retaining a relic of Puritanism. To the latter I reply divine law is the best safeguard of liberty; to the former, God's ways are always safe ways. What we want to establish in this country is neither the Puritan Sabbath nor the Parisian Sabbath, but the Sabbath of Sinai and of Palestine, of Jehovah and of Jesus Christ.

OUR BIBLE SERVICE.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

AS a community, we, in this town, are opposed to anything like progress in our daily lives, and are apt to say in a somewhat exalted style: "What was good enough for our grandfathers will do for us." And so we have been

at a standstill as regards our social lives for the past half century, and the world's revolution has affected us in no way. We cultivate the same old farms, in the same old way; the stage coach makes its tri-weekly appearance and disappearance as it did a half century since. The Episcopalians worship at the little stone chapel, the Unitarians hold semi-monthly meetings at the old town hall, and we of the Orthodox faith attend the old-fashioned, draughty roomy-pewed church on the hill, where our forefathers were wont to sit under the "seventeenthly" and "eighteenthly" of old Parson Herrick, a venerable divine of fifty years ago.

Judge, then, of our astonishment, when our pastor, who had been away for his vacation, returned overflowing with the new project that was then just breaking ground — that of the Bible service, in place of the ordinary forenoon service.

I will not speak here of the slight opposition that met our pastor in his new scheme. Innovation never is regarded with much of favor in an old-fashioned locality, and from grave remarks bearing upon the minister's "new fangled ideas," to a non-attendance by some of the regular church-goers in the morning, all these were met in turn by the somewhat indomitable will of the pastor, who had the spiritual welfare of his people at heart.

"Hadn't no idee th' Bible had so much hist'ry into it," remarked Uncle Caleb Benson last Sunday, after a description of the Cities of Refuge by the pastor, aided by some simple diagrams on the board. "Uncle Caleb," as he is familiarly called, has not, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, been known to frequent the inside of a church as he has since our new routine; his Sabbaths having for the most part been composed of one-third sleep and two-thirds calculations upon the possible profits of his fifty-acre farm.

"Can't stan' a reg'lar sermon no how," remarks Mr. Benson; "but these here sosherble talks is just about the cheese."

Mr. Croydon, who is a non-believer in anything — unless it be his own discernment in spying out the mote in the eye of his neighbor — was induced to attend about a month since; and although he stoutly contends that he goes for the purpose of criticising, yet it is noticed that he pays excellent attention to our pastor's talks, and his criticisms are seldom, if ever, aired. And by the way, a remark he made the other evening, although quite pointed, I could not help feeling to be rather applicable to us as a church, when he said:

"'Pears to me, Con, if I *was* a church-member, I wouldn't be afraid to own it!"

"Why," said I, in some surprise, "did you ever hear any one deny their connection with the church?"

"No-o-o, not exactly," returned that gentleman with some hesitation; "but then actions, you know, speak louder than words; and there is Mr. A, and Mr. B, and C, and Uncle Jim Fellows, and lots more, that go to your prayer-meetings night after night, and yet I never knew one of 'em to own up that he was on the Lord's side."

"Seems to me," continued the critic, "if some of those tongue-tied parties would only contrive to say half a dozen words, people never would say that the prayer-meetings were 'dull;' and you must allow, that however good a brother may be, when he comes to make a ten-minnit prayer, and then follow it up by a fifteen-minnit exhortation, it savors somewhat of sameness, when heard night after night; and if those young folks would only—"

Fortunately for my argumentative powers, I was obliged to leave Mr. Croydon at this juncture, and as Johnnie Briggs joined me on my way home, I asked him how *he* liked the new service.

"It's prime," remarked the youth enthusiastically; "an' I'm goin' ev'ry Sunday."

This, from a boy to whom the Sabbath has been as the shadow of a great monotony (partially induced by the untoward sensation of a supernatural cleanliness,

and the consciousness of a suit of clothes made from the cast-off clothes of an older brother) the going down of whose sun was welcomed by audible expressions of satisfaction, seemed to me so singular, that I asked John Henry how the change had come about in his experience.

"Oh, well," said John Henry, abstractedly fingering the jackknife and pieces of slate pencil in his pocket, "seemed as though when the minister preached he wasn't talkin' to us young fellers, an' I never used to understan' 'bout 'lection an' them things; but now there's lots that a chap *can* understan', an' Bill Herbert an' Joe Swazey is comin' in nex' Sunday. Pr'aps you'll give 'em a chromo," added John Henry, with a grin that made his freckled visage expand like a pair of bellows.

I have spoken of these few more as a type of the class who are affected by the change in our service than from any descriptive intention of persons or characters.

And the steady increase in point of numbers; the decided interest in the Bible lessons; the regular attendance of the old comers, and the evident attention of the new comers, together with the almost entire breaking down of any slight feeling of opposition that might have been manifest at first, seems to point to the fact that the Bible service is thus far a success.

For the future the Master will care as regards its effect on our spiritual lives. Already our evening meetings are shaking off their lethargy to some extent, and more than once, some topic in the forenoon lesson has been the key-note that has given tone and fervor to the prayer-meeting, which has for a long time languished.—*Congregationalist.*

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XXXI.—AUGUST 1, 1875.—THE WATER OF LIFE.

SCRIPTURE.—John 4: 5-15. **Commit 9-15; Primary Verse, 14.**

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being weary with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.
7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.
8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)
9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.
10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.
11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence, then, hast thou that living water?
12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?
13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever, drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.
15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."—Is. 12: 3.

TOPIC.—SPIRITUAL THIRST.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is. 55: 1-13.....Invitation to the Thirsty.
T. Ps. 36: 1-12.....A River of Pleasures.
W. Jer. 2: 4-19..... The Fountain Forsaken.
Th. Zech. 13: 1- 9.....A Fountain to be Opened.
F. Zech. 14: 1- 9.....Living Waters from Jerusalem.
S. Is. 12: 1- 6.....Wells of Salvation.
S. Rev. 22: 1-21.....Pure River of Water of Life.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE JOURNEY.—To what place was Jesus journeying? 3. Why? 1-3. What would the Pharisees have done to him if he had remained? Through what country must he "needs go"? 4. Why was it necessary to go through Samaria? To what city did he come? 5. By what other names was it called? Gen. 12: 6; Acts 7: 16. It is now called *Nablous*, and contains about eight thousand inhabitants. What two noted places were near Sychar? 5, 6.

THE TWO NEEDS.—See if you can find out what three things Jesus needed. 6, 7, 8. What did the Samaritan woman need? 10. What sort of a woman was she? 16-18. Whose need was the greatest—her's or Christ's? Did she realize how great her need was? 10. If she had what would she have done? Have you realized that *you* need Christ? What did the woman say when he first addressed her? 9. The Jews and the Samaritans so hated each other that they would have nothing to do with one another. Did Christ teach them any lesson by thus speaking to this woman?

LIVING WATER.—Did the woman understand what he meant? 11, 12. What did she suppose he referred to? Do *you* understand what he meant by "living water"? What did he mean in verses 13, 14? What is the "water" that Christ gives to us? Rev. 22: 1. How can we get of Christ this living water? 6: 35. If we drink of other water—that is if we taste of worldly pleasures alone—what will happen? 13. Does that happen if we take of the water that Christ gives? 14. *Never thirst again*—for what? Not only keep us from thirst, but what else would it do? 14. Read verse 15 carefully, and see whether you think the woman wanted to drink of this water.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

SAMARIA.—The central division of Palestine during the time of our Saviour. Took its title from the city of that name. In Old Testament times it included all Canaan north of Judea, from Bethel to the northern settlement of Dan, and from the Mediterranean to the Kingdom of Assyria. The Assyrians wrested away that part of it that lay east of the Jordan. Later, Galilee was carved from it, until, finally, it was reduced to the dimensions familiar to us, as one of the three great divisions of Palestine when the Saviour commenced his ministry.

THE SAMARITANS.—"The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," says the woman at the well. Why? Jeroboam, about 1,000 B. C., seceded from the house of David, taking with him ten tribes, over whom he became king. Fearing that the yearly pilgrimages to Jerusalem, which every conscientious Jew felt bound to make, would render his kingdom insecure, he annulled the law requiring the presence annually of every male at the temple in Jerusalem, and appointed Dan and Bethel, two venerable sanctuaries, the one at the north and the other at the south of his dominions, as places of national worship. In each of these he set up a golden calf—the sacred calf of Egypt—with the inscription: "Behold thy God which brought thee out of Egypt." This idolatry was followed by just punishment. In the reign of Hoshea the entire land was despoiled by the Assyrians, and its inhabitants carried away captive. Then the country was re-peopled by colonies composed of its conquerors, among whom were mingled, probably, some of its former inhabitants. 2 K. 7: 24. These colonists, among whom the Lord sent lions, troubled by the visitation he brought upon them, besought their king to send them an Israelitish priest to teach them "the manner of the God of the land." This was done, and the result was a mongrel worship; for, "they feared the Lord and served their own gods." They offered, but were not allowed to help in the rebuilding of the temple on the return of Judah from captivity, B. C. 536. Upon this they became open enemies. In B. C. 409, Manasseh, a priest expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah for an unlawful marriage, obtained permission from Darius Nothus the then Persian king, to erect a temple on Mount Gerizim. The building of this temple made the animosity between the Jews and Samaritans, already great, more bitter than ever. The Samaritans affirmed that their temple was the superior of the two, and that their copy of

the Law was the older and more authoritative. They refused hospitality to pilgrims to Jerusalem, and even waylaid them. It was also charged upon them that some had penetrated into the temple at Jerusalem and defiled its sacred pavement by scattering dead men's bones upon it. On the other hand, the hatred of the Jews was no less active. They despised the Samaritans as a mongrel race, though claiming to be descendants of Joseph and Manasseh. The Samaritans were publicly cursed in their synagogues; were not allowed to testify as witnesses; and they even shut the door of heaven in their faces by declaring that they could not become proselytes. Anything touched by a Samaritan became to a Jew as though it were swine's flesh. As has before been explained, the Jews living in Galilee, away from the narrow bigotry of the capital, did not fully share in this prejudice, hence it was matter of no surprise that the disciples should go to buy meat, while Jesus sat on the well. She, however, supposed him to be a Jew of the Jews, and evidently a distinguished character, and hence her surprise: "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest *drink* of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

This contempt of a Samaritan was shared somewhat even by Christ's Galilean disciples. When, according to their usual custom, the inhabitants of a Samaritan village would not receive our Saviour and his disciples, "because his face was as though he would go toward Jerusalem," James and John wanted immediately to call down fire from heaven to consume these hereditary enemies who had cast a new slight upon them. Luke 9:51–54. Christ himself, probably with a wise regard to this mutual antagonism, at first forbade his disciples to preach the gospel in any city of the Samaritans. Matt. 10:5.

One of the severest taunts that Jewish malignity could inflict upon Christ, as they supposed, was to cry: "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil?" What regard did Christ pay to these partition walls? Broke them down on the first opportunity, though it might bring upon him the hatred and contempt of "his own." Here he talked with this Samaritan Magdalene, as concerned for her as for the learned and influential Nicodemus, with whom he had talked a little while before. *And he talked about the same thing.* The "new birth," and "the well of water springing up into everlasting life" are interchangeable expressions of the same great fact. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, indirectly, but how strongly, he taught the fact that one of that despised race could be a better "neighbor" than even the most honored of the Jews! Luke 10:29–31. In the healing of the ten lepers, an unpalatable comparison again took place; for of the ten there were "not found that had returned to give glory to God save this stranger"—and he was a Samaritan. The fruit of Christ's treatment of this class was seen after his ascension: "Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them."

SYCHAR.—Called, also, Sichem (Gen. 12:16), Sychem (Acts 7:16), and Shechem; by which latter name it was best known. Shechem means *back*, or *shoulder*, and is so called with reference, probably to its being upon a hillside. It lies between Ebal on the north and Gerizim on the south, and is beautiful for situation. Its historic associations are such as always to compel a visit from travelers. Here Abraham built his first altar, and God first appeared to him. Gen. 12:6, 7. Here Jacob dwelt after his return from Mesopotamia, and here he purified his house of idols. Gen. 35:5. Here were uttered those solemn blessings and cursings. Josh. 8:33. Here was the scene of Joshua's farewell. Josh. 24:1. Here it was that ten tribes renounced their allegiance to the house of David to follow Jeroboam, and here he first dwelt as King of Israel. 1 K. 12:25. And here for ages was Jacob's well, and at this place Joseph's bones were buried.

Shechem is perpetuated in the modern *Nablous*, a city of about eight thousand inhabitants. A few Samaritans, now "the smallest and the oldest sect in the world," still observe the Law and keep the Passover with a rigid preciseness long ago intermitted by the Jews themselves. Their copy of the Law consists only of the Pentateuch.

JACOB'S WELL—Is 1½ miles east of the city; is now about 75 feet deep, but from the rubbish accumulated in the bottom, it is evident that it must have been much deeper. It now occasionally has a few feet of water in it, but often runs dry. It is about nine feet in diameter, and was excavated out of the solid rock. Is one of the undisputed localities of the Bible.

CHRIST'S JOURNEY.—1–5. Was compulsory. The Jews "had heard that he baptized more disciples than John, *i. e.*, had kept a spying watch upon him. We are left to infer that they looked upon this fact with jealousy. "His hour" had not yet come, and hence he took himself out of the reach of their toils. No rash risks while there were need of none—an unflinching steadiness when the fatal death-hour drew nigh. John parenthetically explains that he baptized not, but his disciples. There was no need for him to perform the outward rite, for he is the one of whom John the Baptist said: "He baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." It was fit and even necessary that they should do so, but not so with him, for in himself and not in the water lay the blessing.

CHRIST'S NEEDS.—6–9 They were three. 1st.—He was very weary, and needed rest. 6. 2nd.—He was thirsty, and needed water. 7. 3d.—He was hungry, and needed food. 8. In these demands of the flesh we see that truly he was man, and that "the Word was made flesh" is no mere rhetorical flourish. But in the words that follow, just as plainly do we see GOD, for "never man spake like this man."

THE WOMAN'S NEED.—10–13. Her need was great—ah, how much greater than his! He desired merely water to quench his bodily thirst, but she had need of the water of life—was even thirsting for it, as we all thirst for it, without knowing what would slake her thirst—was thirsting for it so much that he said unto her: "If thou knewest, thou wouldest have asked," etc. Would already have done so! Others are like her in her ignorance of Christ as the fountain of peace. *If they only knew*—already they would have asked and obtained from him this living water. She was a castaway, as Christ himself showed her, living now in open adultery. She had drank deeply from the fountain of Death—now for the first time her lips approach the fountain of Life. The cravings of her soul she had sought to satisfy by ministering to lustful passions and carnal appetites. But not thus is the soul made content. Those who drink at the fountain of Pleasure shall thirst again. There is only one place where all soul demands can be met—and that is in the fullness of God.

If thou knewest the gift of God. Christ is spoken of as the Gift of God. Is. 9:6; John 3:16. So is eternal life, Rom. 6:23. So, also, is salvation, Eph. 2:8. The phrase may mean any one, or perhaps, a mingling of all these; or it may refer to the opportunity by which God that day placed all these within her reach. *Living Water.* "Living water," in the natural world, of course, is running water, as opposed to pools of stagnant, lifeless water. What this means in a spiritual sense is explained by himself in verse 14. God speaks of himself as "the fountain of living waters." Ps. 36:8; Jer. 2:13; 17:13. Different interpretations have been put upon the meaning of "living waters" as used in this lesson. It has been supposed to mean "baptism," "the Truth," "the Life," and "the Holy Spirit," by different exegetes As God declares of himself that he is "the fountain of living waters," it is most natural to infer that this means the gift of his Spirit. See John 7:38, 39.

Like Nicodemus, this Samaritan woman is not capable of taking in the great truth that is presented. And, like him, she in her reply is literal only. He has said that he would give *her* living water, and yet he has nothing to draw with! Can he speak and the waters gush forth? And, then, with a touch of national pride —is not the water in this well good enough? Is he greater than our father Jacob that he can produce better water than is in this well—water which satisfied him, his children, and his cattle? But the spark of pride, struck out by the thought, has no chance to live. He is not referring to this water at all, for, as he explains, "whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again"—even as Christ himself was then thirsting, and afterwards on the cross was compelled to cry, "I thirst!"

THE OVERFLOWING FOUNTAIN.—14. It is important carefully to note the bearing upon this verse of the prophecies in Is. 12:3; 44:3; Joel 3:8; Zech. 13:1; 14:8. In none of them are the metaphors an exact echo of the comparison in this verse, and yet in them all the "living water" refers to the same thing. Drawing water "out of the wells of salvation," pouring water "upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground," the "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," etc., all express the fact of the coming of Christ and gift of the Holy Spirit, and announce its office as that of quenching the thirst of the soul for communion with its Maker, or, as cleansing it from all sin, to answer to the varying moods of the heart, which sometimes, above everything else, desires intercourse with God, and, at other times, is wholly possessed with a loathing of sin, and is anxious to get rid of its contamination. This woman evidently desired peace of heart. Her conscience gave her no rest, and so Christ presents to her the same great truth running through all the passages to which we have referred, varying its presentation, however, to suit her need, and describing it as water that would be in her a well of water springing up into everlasting life, if she should once quench her thirst in it. She might have asked: "How shall I partake of this living water?" even as Nicodemus asked: "How can a man be born when he is old?" The answer to that would have been the same as subsequently was given: "He that believeth on me shall never thirst." 6:35. Belief in Christ satisfies the soul. And not only does it satisfy the soul at first, but is a continual ever active source of joy and satisfaction—"a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Compare John 7:37, 38, and Is. 58:11. Consider the four promises in this verse. 1. *Shall never thirst.* Not that there shall be no more desire for this "living water," but that this alone shall answer all the requirements of the soul, so that one shall say: I want nothing else. 2. *A well.* The peace that follows shall be exhaustless. "I will extend peace to her as a river." Is. 66:12. 3. This "well" of peace is to be *within* the believer. His happiness is not to be dependent upon outward circumstances. In the toil and heat of the day, when others faint and perish by the roadside, he will have within himself this source of refreshing. 4. *Springing up.* Is to be *ever* flowing and *overflowing.* Not merely a well from which one may be refreshed—if he draws from it—but a fountain which of itself gushes up, constantly, joyously, making his life as a green and pleasant oasis in the midst of a great desert. Not something which was to be only a source of happiness to oneself, but, inevitably, a blessing to others—a truth exemplified in the case before us: "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman," etc. 39. 5. *Into everlasting life.* As a fountain, even in the midst of a most arid waste, produces a perennial life all around it, so does this "living water" vivify the soul, and make the most sterile heart show signs in new and generous activities of a heavenly life. And the vitality and peace that thus bubbles up

through the soul is not for this life only, but for all the ages of eternity. As the waters that spring up from the earth hear the call of the sea and surely find their way to it, so shall all these aspirations of ours for God, represented by the ever-springing fountain within us, be satisfied when the finite finds its way to the Infinite.

And these promises were not specially to this woman. Over them was written "*Whosoever*." The hope that was held out to her was too great to be limited only to her. It was meant for all people, of all ages, and for all time. Through this one woman was given the universal invitation, uttered already in anticipation by Isaiah: "Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters," and which, as most important, became the last invitation of the Bible: "And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

HER PRAYER.—It is somewhat hard to interpret her prayer. Has she really understood no more than her words imply? Is it possible that that emphatic "whosoever drinketh of *this* water shall thirst again," has not made it plain to her that he speaks of no earthly waters? Or is her reply a half jest in which she struggles to hide the desire for better things which Christ has awakened? She seems so much more apt and quick at learning than Nicodemus that it would seem as if the latter might be true. To us it sounds as the prayer of a sin weary woman whose fevered lips long for a draught of that cooling fountain which he has so vividly set before her. That she did drink from these living waters is inferable from her profession of faith in him. 29. And so, that day, one more was added to that throng that "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of water."

Wayside Flowers.

1.—How much in accord it is with Christ's character that he should forget his own thirst to minister to the greater thirst of this sinful woman! Even when suffering the agonies of the cross his prayer was not for himself, but for his murderers. There he asked not life for himself, but gave life eternal to the repentant thief. He would not assuage his own sufferings on that dreadful day, but provided for the future comfort of his mother. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Luke 22: 27; John 6: 38; 13: 4, 14; 2 Cor. 8: 9; Gal. 3: 13; Phil. 2: 6-8; Heb. 12: 2.

2.—Jesus was weary—very weary—and yet the presence of this lost woman roused him to renewed labor. Why? He gives the reason to his disciples when they come to bring him food: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me *and to finish his work*." How many men through letting such opportunities go by leave their work unfinished! And it is a grand thought that his work would not have been finished without the conversion of this poor unknown Samaritan woman. Such, then, should be our endeavor—to finish our work. Eccl. 9: 10; John 5: 36; 9: 4; 17: 4; 2 Tim. 4: 7.

3.—Jesus esteemed it just as important to talk with this one poor castaway as to a multitude. He never waited for great congregations or thought he must have a large Sunday-school class. And what was the result of teaching this one scholar? "Many believed on him for the saying of the woman," and "many more," brought to him first by reason of her story, "believe because of his own word"—so many that, seeing them coming through the harvest fields, themselves the greater harvest for which he was laboring, he exclaimed to his disciples: "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest? behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." Matt. 13: 31, 32; 25: 21, 40, 45; Mark 9: 41; Luke 8: 18; John 15: 8; Heb. 6: 10.

4.—The despised Samaritans of the present day are the descendants of those who held the Samaritans most in contempt. The very name of a Jew has become a by-word and a reproach. Their punishment is great. Let us not add to it by an un-Christian hatred and contempt. There is still hope for this contemned race. Rom. 11: 1-27; 2 Cor. 3: 14-16.

5.—Oh, the fullness of joy there is in Christ—the constant, inward supply of peace that comes from him. Ps. 16: 9-11; Matt. 5: 6; 2 Cor. 9: 11; 12: 14; Phil. 3: 8, 9; 4: 19.

HYMN.

Jesus, the water of life will give
Freely, freely, freely,
Jesus, the water of life will give
Freely to those who love him.
Come to that fountain, O drink and live,
Freely, freely, freely,
Come to that fountain, O drink and live,
Flowing for those that love him.

Jesus has promised a home in heaven,
Freely, freely, freely,
Jesus has promised a home in heaven
Freely to those that love him.
Treasures unfading will there be given,
Freely, freely, freely,
Treasures unfading will there be given,
Freely to those that love him.

BLACKBOARD.

IF THOU KNEWEST
THE GIFT OF GOD
Thou wouldst have asked
of Him
And he would have given thee
LIVING WATER.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The last lesson we had was about the talk that Jesus had with Nicodemus at Jerusalem. Who can tell anything about that? What did Christ tell Nicodemus he must do? The Saviour could not stay long in Jerusalem, for there were wicked Pharisees who wanted to do him a hurt, and they kept watch of him to see if he would not do something so that they might seize him. They heard that he baptized more disciples than John the Baptist, and they thought that was sufficient excuse to take him. But Jesus knew that they heard of it and intended evil against him and so he went away to Galilee. (Show on map.) So the Pharisees drove him away from Jerusalem. So we can drive him away from our hearts.

2.—It is very hot and dusty in Palestine, and one day at noon Jesus was very tired, and sat down by a well that was dug many hundred years before by Jacob. The well was close by a place called Sychar, or Shechem, and it was in a part of the country called Samaria. (Show on map.) While he was resting there his disciples went off to buy food. After they were gone there came a woman out of the town near by to draw some water. She was not a good woman. She had been a very bad woman. Do you think Christ turned away from her because she was bad? Who was it that he came to save? No he did not turn away. He spoke very kindly to her and asked her to give him a drink. She was surprised that he should ask her for even a drink, for the Jews hated and despised the Samaritans so that they would not eat any of their food nor touch anything if they could help it, that a Samaritan had touched. And she thought that Christ was like all the Jews. But he was not. Did he ever despise or hate any one?

3.—Jesus was very thirsty, but she needed something more than he needed water. Can you guess what it was? She was tired of being a sinner. She wanted to be good. Being wicked makes no one happy, and she was very unhappy. She wanted peace. Christ saw what she wanted, and when she told him that she was surprised that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of her, a Samaritan woman, he told her that if she knew who it was that was talking with her she would have asked him and he would have given her LIVING WATER. (Put on board). Now, what did he mean? Is there anything better when we are thirsty than clear, cold spring water? Do you like to drink the dirty, warm water of a puddle? Well, the soul gets thirsty sometimes just as well as the body. When you wish and wish you were good, then your soul is thirsty—for what? For God—for his Holy Spirit—for LIVING WATER; for God's Spirit is living water to the soul.

4.—And what will happen if we drink of this living water? (Read verses 13, 14.) We shall never *thirst again*. We shall never again be sorry that we are not good, but we will always rejoice in trying to be. It will be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. You have seen a fountain throwing up beautiful jets of water in which you could see a rainbow. Well, that is the way God's Spirit will act in us if we will drink of it. It will spring up in our hearts like a fountain, making us happy and making others happy.

MEMORY VERSES.

Lo! a fountain full and free,
Overflowing ever;
Fainting heart, it is for thee,
Overflowing ever;
Gushing, sparkling, never still,
Taste its sweetness, drink thy fill.

Blessed fount! the purest known,
Overflowing ever;
Stream of life from out God's throne,
Overflowing ever;
Sacred blood for sinners spilt,
This can cleanse away thy guilt.

BLACKBOARD.

THE WATER that I SHALL GIVE
Shall be in you
A WELL OF WATER
Springing up into
EVERLASTING LIFE.

LESSON XXXII.—AUGUST 8, 1875.—JESUS AT BETHESDA.

SCRIPTURE.—John 5 : 5-15. Commit 5-15; Primary Verse, 8.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.
6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?
7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.
8 **Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.**
9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.
10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.
11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.
12 Then asked they him, What man is that which saith unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?
13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.
14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.
15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I am the Lord that healeth thee."—Ex. 15: 26.

TOPIC.—Man's Impotence — God's Omnipotence.

HOME READINGS.

M. Mark 2 : 1-12.....Jesus Healing in the Synagogue.
T. Matt. 21 : 1-16.....Jesus Healing in the Temple.
W. Acts 9 : 32-34.....Cure of an Infirmity of Eight Years.
Th. Luke 13 : 10-17..... Cure of an Infirmity of Eighteen Years.
F. Acts 3 : 1-16.....Cure of one Lame from Birth.
S. Acts 14 : 8-18.....Cure of one Crippled from Birth.
S. Is. 35 : 1-10.....These Cures Foretold.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE POOL.—1-4. What was the pool called? 2. Where was it? Ask your teacher what is the meaning of "Bethesda." What did it have around it? Who were in the "porches"? 3. What were they waiting for? What "troubled" the water? 4. Ask your teacher *if this is true.* After the water was troubled what happened? 4. Do you know of any such springs now?

THE IMPOTENT MAN.—5-7. What does "impotent" mean? What made the man impotent? Mark 2: 3. How long had he had this infirmity? Had he been by the pool all that time? What was the cause of his disease? 14. What had prevented him from being cured by the pool? 7. As he was the worst off what did that show about the rest? In what way are we like the impotent man?

THE OMNIPOTENT HEALER.—What does "Omnipotent" mean? What did Jesus say to the impotent man? Why? What did the man answer? 7. What three things did Jesus tell him to do? 8. What happened to the man? 9. What did he do? His bed was a mere rug. Did he know who healed him? On what day was it?

FAULTFINDING.—Who found any fault? 10. With whom? For what? Why did they think it was wrong to carry his bed? Ex. 20: 10; Num. 15: 32-36. Do you think they were right? Why? What did the man who was healed say about it?

11. Was that a good answer? Mark 2: 28. Did it satisfy the Jews? 12, 16. How did Jesus answer them? 17. What effect did that have? 18. Read the rest of the chapter to see what further he said about it. Did Jesus heal any one else on the Sabbath day? See Home Readings, and Matt. 12: 10-14; John 9: 1-17.

THE WARNING.—Where did Jesus afterward meet the man whom he had healed? 14. What warning did he give him? What "worse thing" than he had had could come upon him? Do you think that Christ had forgiven his sins also? Read Matt. 12: 43-45 and see what the danger is the man was in. See in Lev. 26: 23, 24 how God would treat him for turning away after such great mercy. After the man went away what did he do? 15. Should we also tell what great things Jesus has done for us?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE FEAST.—Considerable interest attaches to the determination of what feast this was that is mentioned in the first verse of this chapter, for the ministry of Christ would be lengthened or shortened accordingly as it is decided to be one or the other. Though other feasts have been fixed upon by different Biblicists, yet the discussion now seems to be pretty well narrowed down to the feasts of Purim and of the Passover. John distinctly mentions three Passovers: 2: 13; 6: 4; 13: 1. Now, if this be still another, then the period of our Lord's ministry was over three years. If it be the feast of Purim, then it will fall between two and three years. The main argument in favor of its being the Passover is that it is not more particularly specified. That being pre-eminently *the* feast of the Jews, it is argued, there was no need of saying more than that "there was a feast," for by that every one would understand what special feast was meant. On the other hand, it is declared that by ch. 4: 35 and ch. 6: 4 it is absolutely proven that it was not the Passover, and that it must be the feast of Purim. The words in ch. 4: 35 were spoken in December, and in the other reference it is said that "the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." Whatever feast it was, therefore, that is referred to it must have fallen between these two dates. That was the feast of Purim which was celebrated on the 13th to the 15th of Adar—a month nearly answering to our month of March. The Passover, it will be recollected came in April.

This last reasoning, though nearly conclusive, is not absolutely so, for it is conditioned on the chronological sequence of the events mentioned in the last part of the fourth, in the fifth, and in the first part of the sixth chapters. And John, writing, as he did, a supplementary Gospel, sometimes grouped facts together that were actually widely separated in point of time. Still, the probability seems to be that in this case the incidents were as near together as is indicated, and that this was the feast of Purim, and, hence, that the shorter period fixed upon for the duration of the public labors of our Saviour is the correct one. What was the feast of Purim?

It was an annual celebration of the Jews for their delivery by Esther from the destruction prepared for them by Haman. Haman spent twelve months in casting lots for an auspicious time to put the Jews to death. Esth. 3: 7. The plan recoiled upon the head of him who conceived it, and in commemoration of the event, the Jews established this feast, which they ironically called *The feast of Purim*, or "The Feast of Lots." The first day of the feast was a day of the strictest fasting, in memory of the time when Mordecai, on learning of the edict of destruction, sat before the King's gate with clothes rent, and having "put on sackcloth and ashes." The other two days were days of unbounded rejoicing, which, after a while, degenerated into unbridled license. The Rabbinical teachings recommend each pious Jew, at that time to "make himself so mellow that he shall not be able to distinguish between 'Cursed be Haman' and 'Blessed be Mordecai.'" All persons, down even to idiots, were obliged to attend the temple service while the book of Esther

was read. Feasting, dancing, games and dramatic entertainments and gift making were the chief features of the occasion. Esther 9: 18, 19. It was a festival in so high esteem that a Jewish proverb arose: "The temple may fail, but Purim never."

It has been wondered at why Jesus should go up to Jerusalem to attend such a feast. But it seems to have escaped the eyes of many that it is not said that he went up to Jerusalem for this purpose. The fact of the festival and the fact of his going up are chronicled together because of their synchronous occurrence, and because their dates were more often fixed by reference to some such festival than by reference to the month.

THE POOL.—2–4. "Sheep market" should be translated "sheep gate." According to the topography of the city, as restored by Nehemiah, this is the gate now known as "St. Stephen's," looking out toward Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives. The pool of Bethesda (*House of Mercy*) until lately, has always been located just inside of it, and has been supposed to be a large cavity some 75 feet in depth, now entirely dry, and having trees within it. Robinson, who has done so much in giving us correct re-locations of Scriptural places, threw discredit on that, and decided in favor of the upper fountain of Siloam, now known by the name of "The Fountain of the Virgin." This is at the south-eastern extremity of the Temple mount, near Mount Ophel, and is connected with the pool of Siloam by a remarkable passage about two feet wide and 1750 feet long, through which Robinson had the hardihood to crawl. The water in it has a peculiar taste—sweet and somewhat brackish—and at intervals bubbles up, and at the same time rises. Robinson saw it rise more than a foot within five minutes. It ceases to flow within ten. This, certainly, would answer to the idea that the pool was an intermittent spring, and, also, to the fact that the impotent man did not have time enough to get down into the waters, before the troubling ceased. It is suggested that this fountain is too far from Stephen's gate to answer to the requirements. But with equal force it may be said that Stephen's gate is too far from it to be the "sheep gate" referred to. Perhaps a new gate has yet to be located.

The fourth verse is regarded as spurious. It was, probably, at first, merely a marginal note in the Scriptural MSS., stating the popular belief as to the cause of the cures and the troubling of the pool. The reasons for so supposing are that it has marks of growth about it; has a variety of readings; in some MSS. there are marks showing doubt of its authenticity, and in others it is omitted entirely. If, however, it be regarded as genuine, it is still to be looked upon only as a statement by John, showing what the popular conception was concerning the pool.

THE IMPOTENT MAN.—5–7. The word "infirmity" generally refers to permanent rigidity of the limbs, or inability to move them, and, therefore indicates the results of some disease, rather than the disease itself. Examples of this are given in the Home Readings. He had been thus disabled for thirty-eight years. It does not say that he was at the pool so long, and so those inferences that have been drawn as to his being a man of no will are utterly unjustifiable. It is evident, however, from his reply to Christ, that he had been there a long time. Long weary years of baffled hope and expectation are expressed in that short answer. *Wilt thou be made whole?* What a question to be addressed to one who had for thirty-eight years been powerless in the iron grip of such a terrible disease—who had lain by those healing waters, looking at them with longing unutterable, and yet, who, time and time again, had seen his sturdier and less needy fellows snatch the coveted opportunity away from him, ere his poor, palsied limbs could bear him to the water's brink! What a wretched, wretched life he had spent before that

pool. How full of vain hopes and bitter despair. How often had he experienced in their stepping down before him the utter selfishness of man. No one had been found to say to him: "You are worse off than I—let me help you in, and I will wait." It would have been so easy for some one to have waited once—so hard for him to wait times without number. And this was, perhaps, the first kindly, helpful voice he had heard. How strongly within him must have thrilled that voice, so divinely sympathetic: "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" And so, first, the man's grateful impulses were stirred; and this was to arouse him to the next act—an act of faith.

THE OMNIPOTENT HEALER.—8, 9. It was not the first time that Omnipotence was face to face with Impotence, and bestowed strength on the powerless. Happily, too, for us, it was not the last time. Jesus and the helpless sinner never come together without the same offer of help: "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" Alas! that it is so often rejected. Two things are noticeable about this narrative. The first is that though it was a time of festivity, Jesus was not to be found among the merry. Not that he had no responsive sympathy with innocent joys, for our first glimpse of him after he commenced his ministry is at a wedding, and at other times we see him at social banquets; but it is of his character that he should be found in such hospitals as Bethesda rather than in the midst of such bacchanalian orgies as were then rife in the city. At any time one would be more certain of finding him in such a place than in a palace, but this time of all others. The second point is—the patient whom he selected. He selected the worst case. The others had no such need as this impotent man, for his was a case beyond hope. And this was to increase our faith in him. His spiritual cures, also, were of those whom men would have given over—the Mary Magdalenes, the thief upon the cross, the perjured Peter, the persecutor Saul, Zaccheus, the dishonest taxgatherer. And lest any one should consider himself worse than any of these he made proclamation: "*Whosoever* believeth in me shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life;" and illustrated his willingness to receive back the worst of all in the story of the Prodigal Son.

Three things does this Omnipotent Healer say to this helpless invalid: *Rise—take up thy bed—and walk.* It was a wonderful thing, after so many years of impotent inactivity, to rise—a more wonderful thing still to take up the rug upon which he was lying—and most wonderful of all *to walk.* At that divine command, which never yet was disobeyed, there came a tide of new life and a sense of power into those shrunken, powerless limbs, and he rises to his feet—a new man in Christ Jesus. So full of wonder is he at this miraculous cure, so engaged, perhaps, in testing its reality that Jesus easily slips away through the throng before he can withdraw his attention from himself to his benefactor. He rises, he walks, he bears away his bed—it is testimony to his cure that is unimpeachable.

THE FAULT-FINDING.—10–13; 16–47. "*The same day was the Sabbath.*" How often was this a stumbling block to the Jews, and an occasion of accusation against him. In their strict formalism they had taken all real worship out of their Sabbath, and had left only its mere shell—the command to do no work. And the obeying of this they had carried to an absurd extreme. One could not wear nailed shoes on the Sabbath, for that would be carrying a burden, but he could wear shoes that were not nailed; he could wear two shoes, but not one alone; one man could carry a loaf of bread, but two could not carry the same loaf between them; and so on, through a host of distinctions so nice and minute that the unlearned Jew must often have been sorely puzzled. These strictures were unfair deductions from Ex. 20: 10; 23: 12; 31: 13–17; Num. 15: 32–36; Jer. 17: 21–27. But though they were thus rigorous in refraining from all appearance of work, it is wrong to suppose that

the Sabbath was otherwise strictly regarded. Some of the Pharisaic maxims show how full of sensual pleasure it had become: "Let thy table be covered with fish, flesh and generous wine;" "Let the seats be soft and adorned with beautiful cushions, and let elegance smile in the furniture of the table;" "Utter nothing but what is provocative of mirth and good humor;" "Be resolute and merry, though ruined in debt;" "Walk leisurely, for the law requires it, as it does, also, longer sleep in the morning," etc. It is of the very essence of formalism, whether of that time or this, to be scrupulous in the observance of ceremonies and lax in true worship—to regard fully the letter, but to be unmindful of the spirit of the law.

Those who found fault with Christ were the members of the Sanhedrim—not the common people, for "they heard him gladly." They objected to his healing on the Sabbath, because that was a sort of work. But in connection with several cases of healing on that day he so clearly showed the absurdities between their theories and their practice that their mouths were closed. See Matt. 12: 10–13; Luke 13: 10–17; 14 1–6; John 7: 21–34; 9: 1–40. The latter part of our lesson-chapter needs also to be studied with regard to the same matter, two thoughts being specially prominent in it: 1st, that the Son is equal with the Father; 2nd, that he is Lord of the Sabbath day. In passing, let us say, that if the Unitarian idea be the true one, then the Jews were wrong in their supposition as expressed in the 18th verse, and the Saviour should have lost no time in setting them right; whereas, he confirmed them still more in their belief. 21, 23.

THE WARNING.—14, 15. It is a good sign that the Saviour found the man whom he had healed in the temple, for it is probable that he was there to return thanks for his cure, and, perhaps, to find the one who had restored him to health. See similar case in Acts 3: 8. While not so positive in his testimony as the blind man (John 9), who, to all railing against his healer, constantly interposed the fact that he that was blind had been made to see, yet he had likewise borne witness for Christ. The Jews had told him that it was unlawful for him to carry his bed. His reply was: "*He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk.*" That to him was ample justification for his act. And their next ques- was, not what man was it that made thee whole, but, "what man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk." They ignored the miracle in the offence. It was after this encounter with the Jews that Jesus met him in the temple, and, more anxious to heal the soul than the body, tells him: "*Thou art made whole, go and sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee.*" From this we deduce the conclusion that his disease had been the direct consequence of sin, *and that he knew it.* Christ, however, never sanctioned the idea that all disease was the consequence of sin, but instead, actually opposed it. Luke 13: 2, 3; John 9: 3. But here was a case where a man needed to understand that he who made him whole knew his guilty secret—and pardoned him. Still farther, he needed to feel that his restorer had power to punish as well as bless, and that now to renew his sin would be to bring upon himself a worse punishment than he had been suffering—worse, perhaps, in this life; certainly so for the other. See Lev. 26: 23, 24; Matt. 12: 45. He went out of the temple a convicted sinner, and inasmuch as he published the fact that it was Jesus that made him whole, let us hope that he went out a converted one.

SYMBOLS.—The typical figure of this miracle of course is the impotent man. In him the sinner finds a perfect representation—unable in any way to help himself. Augustine likened the five porches to the Law, because they *showed* their sick, but could not *cure* them; *and in them lay a great multitude of folk, blind, halt, withered.* Chrysostom, referring by comparison to that other fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, exclaims: "Here after the first a second

descends, after the second a third and fourth; and were it a thousand, didst thou cast the whole world into this spiritual fountain, the grace would not be worn out, the gift expended, the fountain defiled, the liberality exhausted." And, lastly, the church is a good deal like the pool of Bethesda, of no particular efficacy except when its waters are "troubled" at certain seasons, known as seasons of revival. Whereas, the simple Word of God is able at any time to effect a cure.

Wayside Flowers.

1.—*Wilt thou be made whole?* A man must *will*—must desire to be made whole, or there is no help for him. Matt. 22: 2, 3; 23: 37; John 1: 11; 3: 19; 12: 37–41.

2.—But all that we can do is to desire—to cry out for help. We can have faith in the great Healer, but he alone can effect the cure. The sinner is utterly helpless, made impotent by sin. It is only the power of divine grace that can give him strength to rise: "For when we were yet *without strength* in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 3: 20, 27, 28; 4: 16; 5: 6; 11: 16; 1 Cor. 1: 29–31; Eph. 2: 5, 8, 9.

3.—But after the miracle of healing has been performed, or, rather, simultaneously with it, comes the command: "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." We are to be erect in a new manhood—not only to be free, but to show others we are free. Rom. 6: 4; 13: 12–14; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15; Eph. 2: 10; 4: 22–32; Col. 3: 10; 1 Tim. 6: 12.

4.—It is a happy thing for us that Christ's power was made manifest in some of the worst cases. Happy, too, that it is evident that he came for such. "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick"; "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"; "For the Son of men is come to seek and to save that which was lost"; "And you he hath quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Surely no one can say that he is worse off than those who were "dead" in trespasses and sins. It was meant that man should see that there is hope for those who esteem themselves beyond hope of eternal life—dead in their sins. John 5: 24; Rom. 5: 6; Eph. 2: 1, 4–6; Col. 2: 13; 1 John 5: 11–13.

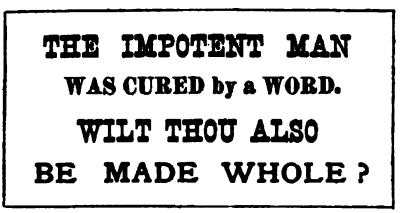
5.—To every one who hath been healed is the injunction: "*Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*" Matt. 12: 43–45; Luke 12: 47, 48; John 15: 22; Heb. 6: 4–6; 10: 26, 27; 2 Pet. 2: 20, 21.

HYMN.

Though unworthy, vile, unclean,
Look and live, look and live;
Look away from self and sin,
Look and live.

Long by Satan's power enslaved,
Look and live, look and live;
Look to Me, ye shall be saved,
Look and live.

BLACKBOARD.



THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Jesus is back in Jerusalem again. Since the talk at the well in Samaria he has done wonderful things. He has healed the son of a nobleman without even going to see him; he has cured a man possessed of a devil; has healed a leper, a paralytic, raised a little girl from the dead, gave sight to two blind men, and done many other marvelous works. Now he is once more in Jerusalem, and it is the time of a great feast. During this feast, which lasted three days, the people made themselves very merry with feasting and drinking. Where do you think Jesus was to be found when such things were going on? Among those who were eating and drinking? No. He was to be found among the sorrowful. Our Saviour was not one to take part in a drunken carousal.

2.—Jerusalem had a great wall all around it. This wall had a great many gates and one of them was called the "Sheep Gate." Near this gate there was a pool of water that sometimes would bubble up, and when it did so the people thought that an angel "troubled" it; and when the water was troubled by the angel they believed that if any sick person would step into the water he would be healed. And so a great many sick people came to this pool to get cured. There were people there that were blind, people that were lame, people that were all wasted away by sickness, and people that had lost the use of their limbs. It was a sorry sight to see them. And here Jesus was to be found—not among the merry makers.

There was one man there that could scarcely move himself at all. He had been that way a long, long time. How long should you guess? Do you know of any one who has been sick for a long time? How long? Well, this man had been sick for *thirty-eight years!* He had been brought to this pool that he might be cured. But when the water was troubled it was troubled only for just a few minutes, and he could move only so very slowly that before he could get down into the water some other one had gone in before him and so prevented him from getting in. When Jesus saw

him and knew that he had been a long time in that case he had compassion on him and asked him if he would like to be made whole. Perhaps that was the first time that any one had taken any interest in him. Very likely the people had become so used to seeing him there that they had ceased to notice him at all, or only thought: "There is that old cripple here still; why don't he go home?" Jesus spoke so kindly that the poor man told him all about his troubles. And then the Saviour spoke to him in a voice of authority, saying unto him: "Rise—take up thy bed—and walk." And the man immediately arose and took up his bed and walked. Wonderful—wasn't it?

3.—And the same day was the Sabbath. The Jewish rulers did not like to have Jesus heal on the Sabbath, because they thought that was working on that day. Well, it isn't right to work then, but it is lawful to do good—to tend the sick, to comfort the distressed. If any of those same rulers had found that an ox of theirs had fallen in a pit they would have helped him out. And they would have done rightly. But they did not like it because this man was cured, and so they began to persecute Jesus, and to contrive how they might put him to death. And this drove him away again from Jerusalem. It is right to do good on the Sabbath. Mention some things you may do. Now some things you ought not to do.

4.—The man who was healed was so overjoyed that he did not look to see who had healed him! He could hardly believe that he could walk about after he had been crippled so long. And while he was trying his new found power Jesus slipped away from him in the crowd. Afterward the Saviour found him in the temple—thanking God perhaps for his recovery. And Jesus said unto him: "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee." His disease had been caused by some sinful act. Jesus was more anxious to make him stop sinning than to heal his body, so he tells him that if he sins again a worse thing will happen to him. What could there be worse than thirty-eight years of sickness? An eternity of punishment would be worse.

Very often you have thought: "I wish I could be good!" just as that impotent man often said: "I wish I could walk!" It has seemed very hard to you always to be good. What makes it hard? It is hard because sin has taken away your power to act right, and made you helpless as the man who could not get into the pool. You are crippled by sin. Now what does Christ say to you? He says just what he said to the impotent man: "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" If you say Yes to that in your heart, he will make you whole and give you power to be good. And then you must sin no more lest you have a worse thing come unto you.

MEMORY VERSE.

Heal me, Lord, my flesh is weak;
Heal me, for thy grace I seek;
This my only plea I make—
Heal me for thy mercy's sake.

BLACKBOARD.

WILT THOU
BE MADE WHOLE?

LESSON XXXIII.—AUGUST 15, 1875.—THE BREAD OF LIFE.

SCRIPTURE.—John 6: 47-58. Commit 47-58; Primary Verse, 50.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.
48 I am that bread of life.
49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead.
50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.
51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.
52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?
53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.
54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.
55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.
56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.
57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.
58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."—Ex. 16: 15.

TOPIC.—SPIRITUAL HUNGER.

HOME READINGS.

M. Ex. 16: 1-36.....The Typical Bread.
T. 2 K. 4: 38-42.....Twenty Loaves Increased.
W. John 6: 1-16.....The Loaves and Fishes Increased.
Th. Matt. 15: 29-39.....The Miracle Repeated.
F. Luke 22: 1-30.....The Symbolic Broken Bread.
S. 1 Cor. 10: 1-21.....The Communion Bread.
S. 1 Cor. 11: 23-29.....The Bread Memorial.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE BREAD MIRACLE.—Where was the miracle of bread performed? 1; Luke 9: 10. How many people were present? Matt. 14: 21. How many would that be? How much food did the disciples have to feed them with? 9. Was that enough? What did Jesus do to it? 11. Was it enough then? 12, 13. Were there ever any other miracles like this? 2 K. 4: 38–42; Matt. 15: 29–39. After Jesus had performed this one what did the people say he was? 14. What did they want to do with him? 15. Who was "that prophet" they referred to? Deut. 18: 15-18. And *that* means—whom?

THE TYPICAL BREAD.—What bread is referred to as "typical" bread? 30. "Typical" means: "like something that is to come." What likenesses can you see between manna and Christ, and tell them to your teacher. See how many things you can find out about manna in Num. 11: 7-9; Ex. 16: 1-36. Now, in what respect was it *un*-like Christ? 49, 50.

THE TRUE BREAD.—Who is it that is called "the true Bread"? What other names are given to this Bread? 33, 48, 50, 51. Why is he called the *true* Bread? The Bread of God? Bread of Life? Bread from heaven? Living bread? Why do you think that Jesus likens himself to bread at all? In the second lesson before this what else was he called? Can you get along without bread? Without water? Well, as Jesus is called the Bread and the Water of Life—what does that mean? Read verses 51–56 and see if you can understand them. How can you eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood? Look at the last three Home Readings and see if they will help you any. My dear young friends, I hope you have thus partaken of Christ or that you will immediately do so.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE MIRACLE OF BREAD—*Occurred* in a desert place belonging to the city of Bethesda (Luke 9: 10), and was just before the Passover. 4. *The persons fed* were in number "about five thousand men, beside women and children"—probably ten thousand in all. *The supply* was "five barley loaves and two small fishes." "But what are they among so many?" Yet, when Christ blessed the food, "they did all eat and were filled; and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full." Matt. 14: 20. This miracle was subsequently repeated at Decapolis. Matt. 15: 29–39. It had its Old Testament precursor in the miracle performed by Elisha. 2 K. 4: 38–42. *The result* was that the people declared him to be "that Prophet" referred to in Deut. 18: 15–18—the likeness to which is especially brought out in Heb. 2: 14–17. The expectation of this prophet we have already met with. 1: 45. And, further, the people would, by force, make him a king. This they would do, because he had satisfied their bodily hunger with bread. With a monstrous imperception of their higher wants and of the more exceeding value of the Bread of life, when he made it appear that his mission was not as king to supply a host of subjects with unearned barley loaves, but to minister to their spiritual hunger only, they turned upon and crucified him. Their adoration was the praise of a satisfied appetite, enduring only so long as it was gratified. The people followed him to the other side of the sea, because "they did eat of the loaves and were filled." If the religion of Christ had only been a surety of "loaves and fishes," instead of a life of self-denial, all the world would now have been following him.

BETTER BREAD.—27. Coupled with his rebuke for following him from so unworthy a purpose, he exhorts them: "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The command was addressed to those who were concerned only for getting the bread that "perisheth." It is addressed to all those who are giving all their energies to business

merely for the luxuries it will afford them. "Wherefore do ye spend your money for naught, and your labor for that which satisfieth not!" Is. 55:2. For it is not in the power of any earthly thing to give more than a temporary gratification. The things for which they are striving perish, and the body for whose interest they were procured also will perish; and what, then, shall be done for the immortal hunger of the soul? "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14:17.

This was the injunction given to those who had not yet tasted the "bread of life," and come to esteem it above all earthly gratifications. Very differently, however, are the words spoken to those who had eaten of the true bread, and drank of the water of life. They were told to take no anxious thought, saying: "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" They were told not to do this, for this is what the "Gentiles" do, and because "your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." The one class were to cease from making "the meat that perisheth the main object of their labor"— the other were not to be over anxious about its being a sure supply. The one was administered as a rebuke, the other were words of heavenly comfort.

THE TYPICAL BREAD. — 30–32, 49. The people who had followed him from that wonderful feast, while the memory of that miracle was still fresh, ask him, "What sign showest thou that we may see and believe thee?" When the miracle was first performed they declared that he was the Messiah —"that Prophet." Now, already, they want another proof. The fact shows the futility of miracles alone to make men permanent followers of Christ, and that it was well, that, having fully attested his divinity, they should be discontinued. To make men his faithful disciples there must be, not a miracle of bread, but a miracle of the heart.

They hint at the sign they want. "Our fathers," they say, "did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat." The suggestion that they thus clothe in these words is: "You pretend to be greater than Moses. Well, Moses gave our fathers bread from heaven for the space of forty years. Now, if you really are greater than he, show it by giving *us* bread from heaven in a way as miraculous." And, they might have added, so that we may get it without working for it. One meal of unearned bread had opened up a paradise of laziness before them, and they were anxious to enter into it.

If he were the real Messiah, according to their traditions, he would give them something better than mere barley loaves — he would enrich and crown them, banquet them on pomegranates and "a vineyard of red wine, and upon the flesh of behemoth and leviathan, and the great bird Bar Juchne!"

That bread, Jesus explains, was not from heaven. It seemed to come out of heaven, because it fell with the dew. But it only seemed to do so. It was a gift *of* heaven, not a gift *from* it. It was a type, faulty, indeed, but still a type of the true bread that was to come, for Rev. 2:17 speaks of Christ as the "hidden manna." Let us say, parenthetically, that nothing can certainly be regarded as a type except those things which are recognized as such in the New Testament. All other likenesses may be good resemblances, good symbols and happy illustrations, but they can not be said to be types. The typical resemblances in this are: 1, A gift of God without merit from man; 2, was bread from heaven; 3, enough for all who would take of it; 4, was to be eaten daily; 5, beaten and broken before eaten; 6, was sent to sustain during a wilderness journey. It was *un*-like in the fact that "your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead," whereas, Christ is "the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." The

facts and appearance of manna are to be gathered from Ex. 16; Num. 11: 7-9; Deut. 8: 3, 16; Josh. 5: 12: Ps. 78: 24, 25.

THE TRUE BREAD.—32–50. "True," because it supports the true life—the life of the soul. True as compared with manna, because that sustained the physical life only, and for a little time, while this was for the soul, and to eat of it was to live for ever. Called also "the bread of God" (33, see 3: 16); "the bread from heaven" (41, see 3: 13); "bread of life" (48, see 1: 4); "living bread." 51. Christ has been spoken of as "living water" (4: 10); now as "living bread"—the term "living," in this instance, referring to the life-imparting powers of that bread. The method of appropriating that bread to one's own salvation he speaks of in verses 35, 47: "He that cometh unto me shall never hunger," and "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Notice the present tense in each case—"*cometh*"—"*believeth*." It does not say whosoever hath come, or hath believed, but whosoever comes now—believes now. There is a test for one's Christian experience. The question is not whether you have at some time or other believed on Christ, but do you believe on him NOW? And so in relation to eternal life. It is not a promise that one *shall* have eternal life, but "he that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life." 5: 24. The germs of immortality are already moving. In the next life we shall see only the blossoms of the seeds that commenced their growth here. Equally significant is the promise: "shall never hunger." That covers all the future. It would not be enough to say, "He that cometh to me *doth* not hunger," for that would imply nothing but present satisfaction. But our satisfaction in Christ is to be eternal, and, hence, it was said: "shall *never* hunger." What immeasurable comfort there is in the two phrases: "*hath* eternal life"—"shall never hunger"! The words were selected with divine care and solicitude, that we might see the infinity of joy and peace immediately opening before him who comes unto and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE BROKEN BREAD.—51–58. To the disappointed and bitter Jews he speaks only in words of unsolvable mystery. They are angry at his suggestion that he came down from heaven. "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" But now he lays before them a truth, more mystical than any he has yet spoken, and the literal interpretation of which is exceedingly repulsive, but the spiritual meaning of which is, to those who spiritually apprehend it, both joy and peace. They must "eat" the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, or they have no life in them. They stupidly take the literal meaning, and wrangle over it, while all along, it has been plainly manifest that he spoke of himself as bread only in a spiritual sense. And so Christ always was to all undevout Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.

The fact referred to in these words is the same to which he has already twice prophetically pointed (2: 19; 3: 14, 15)—his coming death upon the cross. The phraseology of verses 51, 53–58 is so much like that used by the Lord in the Last Supper (Luke 22: 19) that it has been supposed by many to mean the same thing. Underneath each, indeed, is the same underlying fact. In so far as each refers to the approaching crucifixion they are alike. But the act enjoined in each case is utterly different. In this it is an appropriation of Christ the sacrifice—in the other it is a memorial of him.

In what respect can it be said that we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man? Bear in mind that he was speaking of himself as spiritual bread. This, then, was a continuance of the illustration, and refers to the feeding of the soul upon Christ as the bread of life. In the same way spoke the prophet Jeremiah: "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart, for I am called by thy name, O Lord of hosts."

Jer. 15:16; see, also, Ps. 34:8; 1 Pet. 2:3. The illustration is all the more pertinent when we remember that the Passover lamb, which was so exactly a type of Christ, after it was slain was eaten. Possibly the near approach of the Passover—to the celebration of which at Jerusalem the multitude surrounding the Saviour were likely even then on their way—caused him to change the expression from that of bread to that which was more specially applicable to him as our real Passover Lamb. Our dependence upon Christ for spiritual life, represented here by the necessity of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, is, in the 15th chapter, illustrated by the dependence of the branches upon the vine for their sustenance: "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered." Because there is no life in him except as he draws it from the vine. "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Rom. 7:18.

In this comparison of the vine and the branches, our dependence upon the Saviour for spiritual life is more plainly evident than when he is referred to simply as Bread. But the illustration is, after all, only a shade more forcible. For what can take the place of bread? It is a fact that is pleasant to dwell upon that Christ, in setting forth his relations to us, always compares himself to those things which are to us of the highest necessity. He is "the true Light," "the Life," "the true Vine," of which we are the branches; "the bread of life," and "living water." If the branches can live without the vine; if we can exist without light and without life; if we can be sustained without bread and without living water — then, also, can we live without Christ. Let men be compelled to substitute wine for water, and something else for bread; let the branches be lopped off the vines; and let the sun be stricken from the universe, and the results would be a fair illustration of the unappeased hunger and thirst, and the moral desolation and darkness that would come were Christ removed from our spiritual world.

After partaking of this bread comes the indwelling of Christ, set forth in verse 56. The idea is the same as that in John 4:14, where, after one has partaken of Christ, the Living Water, the draught becomes in him "a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." The indwelling is mutual—He in us, and we in Him. We are conscious of his dwelling in us when we feel his interest in us extending into all our daily cares and perplexities; when he pours upon our heart a balm of healing; when we find that our life is vitalized and sustained by his; and when our routine duties are sanctified to higher purposes than the obtaining of the "bread which perisheth." And we are conscious of dwelling in Him when our thoughts are taken out of self and into him; when we seem to rise above the world and all the things which are in it; when time seems nothing and eternity everything; when we realize that "here have we no continuing city, but seek one to come"; when we earnestly pray: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"; and when we long to depart and be with Christ, and see him face to face. This indwelling of Christ is often referred to in the Scriptures. Paul expresses the hope that "Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," (Eph. 3:17); he speaks of "Christ in you the hope of glory," (Col. 1:27). This indwelling is the justification for calling us "the temple of the living God," and for saying: "Ye are the body of Christ." And Christ says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me." Rev. 3:20. And, lastly, the unity of believers is thus established: "We being many are one bread and one

body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17.

A skeptic was trying to confuse a colored man by the seeming contradiction there is in the expression: "He dwelleth in me, and I in him," but he received for answer: "Oh! dar's no puzzle 'bout dat; it's like dat poker; I put it in de fire till it gets red hot, now de poker's in de fire, and de fire's in de poker." And what wiser reply could have been given?

Wayside Flowers.

1.—The great danger, against which men are warned over and over again, is that of setting their affection upon the things of this world—of laboring only for the meat that perisheth—of letting the demands of the body stifle the cry of the soul. 1 Ch. 22: 19; Ps. 62: 10; 119: 36, 37; Matt. 6: 19; Luke 12: 15; Rom. 8: 5, 6; Phil. 3: 19; Col. 3: 2; 1 Tim. 6: 17, 18; Jas. 4: 14; 1 John 2: 15, 17.

2.—Men often feel that if they could have seen the miracles that Jesus performed they would then have believed on him. Did the Jews do so? Miracles may convince the reason, but they do not convince the heart. That must lay hold upon Christ before the soul acknowledges its Redeemer. John 6: 44; Matt. 16: 16, 17; 11: 25, 26; Rom. 10: 9, 10.

3.—"He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." The promise is that we shall be satisfied—satisfied—satisfied! No desire of the soul shall remain ungratified—no longing that shall not be completely met. Ps. 16: 11; 17: 15; 31: 19; Is. 26: 3; 64: 4; John 14: 27; 2 Cor. 3: 18; Phil. 4: 7.

4.—The great boon of salvation is obtained merely by believing—and by nothing else. No works, no goodness of our own entitle us to everlasting life—nothing but faith. Whoever can say, "I believe," though he has also immediately to add, "God help my unbelief," has the key of heaven. Mark 16: 16; John 3: 16–18, 36; 5: 24; 6: 47; Acts 16: 30, 31; Rom. 3: 20, 27, 28; 11: 6; 1 Cor. 1: 29–31.

5.—Doth Christ dwell in us? Then we shall show it by having his spirit. The "witness" that we are the Sons of God shall be within. We shall show forth the indwelling of that divine life by our walk, by our conversation, by our countenances even. John 14: 23; Rom. 8: 16; 2 Cor. 13: 5; 1 John 3: 24; 4: 13–16; 5: 10.

HYMN.

We are hungry; Lord behold us,
Hear, oh hear thy children cry.
Give us bread our souls to nourish,
Give us manna from on high.

We are hungry; thou hast promised
We shall ever more be fed.
Thou dost say to those that trust thee:
I will give you Living Bread.

BLACKBOARD.

He that Cometh to Me
SHALL NEVER HUNGER;
He that Believeth on Me
SHALL NEVER THIRST.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—A great multitude followed Jesus out into a desert place near Bethsaida. (Show location.) They became hungry, and the disciples had nothing to give them to eat. A little boy was there who had five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what were they among so many! (Describe the miracle—seating the people in ranks—the blessing of the bread—the miraculous result—the declaration of the multitude that this was the Messiah.)

2.—Next tell of Jesus going up into the mountain to escape being made a king. He wanted to be king over the hearts of men, not over their stomachs. Tell of the danger of the disciples on the sea—the walking of Christ on the water—of the people who followed him because they "did eat of the loaves and were filled"—of their demand for bread from heaven such as Moses had brought down—and the reason of it.

3.—Christ's rebuke—"Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Christ tells them that *he* is bread from heaven. He is the *true* bread. The bread which we daily eat will keep us alive only a little while. The manna which God gave through Moses did not keep people from dying. But Christ said if we should eat the True Bread, which is himself, we should never die. What should never die?—our bodies? There is a worse death than that of the body—the eternal death of the soul. To eat of the True Bread is to have everlasting life instead of eternal death. How shall we do this? By believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE.

O our Father, thou hast taught us
If we ask it shall be given.
Grant us bread that will not perish—
Bread that cometh down from heaven.

BLACKBOARD.

Lord Evermore
GIVE US THIS BREAD.

LESSON XXXIV.—AUGUST 22, 1875.—JESUS THE CHRIST.

SCRIPTURE.—John 7 : 40-46. Commit 40-46; Primary Verse, 46.

40 Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.
41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?
42 Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?
43 So there was a division among the people because of him.
44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.
45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?
46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord hath anointed me."—Is. 61 : 1.

TOPIC.—Christ Hidden — Christ Revealed.

HOME READINGS.

M. Deut. 18 : 18-22 .....The Predicted Prophet.
T. Jer. 23 : 1- 8.....To be of the Seed of David.
W. Micah 5 : 1-12.....To be Born at Bethlehem.
Th. Is. 52 : 1-15.....Marred more than any man.
F. Is. 53 : 1-12 .....Led as a Lamb to Slaughter.
S. Matt. 3 : 1-17.....Baptized with the Holy Ghost.
S. Acts 1 - 1-11.....Received into Heaven.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE DISCUSSION.—Jesus was once more in Jerusalem. He did not come there often — why? 1. What feast did he come to attend? 2, 14. Before he came what discussion arose concerning him? 12. How was this question discussed? 13. When he came what did he do? 14. What effect did his teaching have? Why did some think he was not the Messiah? 23. What made others think he was not? 26, 27. What reply did he make to those who thought he could not be Christ because he healed on the Sabbath? 21-23. What reply to those who thought he could not be Christ because they knew whence he was? 28, 29. Did they know whence he was? 41. Was he from Galilee?

THE PEOPLE. What did the people decide him to be? 40. See the first Home Reading and find *what* "Prophet." Did they all think alike as to who the prophet was to be? 41. Some thought, then, that Christ was only a prophet — others that he was — what? Why did some of the people doubt that he was Christ? 41, 42. Where *was* he born? Of whose seed was he? Did they know this? Why were they led to believe in Christ at all? 31, 40.

THE OFFICERS.—What were they sent to do? 32. Did they succeed? 30, 44, 45. What reason did they give? 46. How did he speak? Matt. 7 : 29. What had he said unto them? 33, 34. Did Christ's speaking ever again have any such effect upon those sent to take him? 18: 6.

THE RULERS.—Did the rulers believe in Christ? What did they say to the officers? 47-49. *Had* any of the rulers believed on him? 3 : 1, 2. What did Nicodemus now say? 51. What did they reply? 52. Were they right? See in what town in Galilee the prophet Jonah was born? 2 K. 14 : 25. Read Isaiah 9 : 1, 2 and then say whether you think no prophet was to come out of Galilee.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE FEAST. — 1-14. We have the presence of Jesus again at another feast —this time the Feast of Tabernacles. His journey up to Jerusalem was an humiliation. It is said in the introductory part of the chapter that Jesus did not walk in Judea, for the Jews sought to kill him. That explains why he went up to the feast, "not openly, but in secret." He who had perfect right to the whole world, not only did not have where to lay his head, but in a manner was compelled to hide it.

The Jews had three great feasts. The *Passover*, which celebrated their deliverance from Egypt and from the death-angel, took place in the beginning of harvest, in April. *Pentecost* occurred fifty days after the second day of the Passover feast, on the completion of the grain harvest, and, perhaps, was historically connected with the giving of the Law from Sinai. The feast of *Tabernacles* was observed just after the gathering of grapes, and was commemorative of the time when all Israel dwelt

in tents, during the long wilderness journey. It began on the 15th of Tizri (Oct.) and lasted seven days, the people all the while dwelling in the streets and on the flat roofs in tents made of leafy branches. Like the feast of Purim, it was a joyous, festal time, though not, like it, a time of mere wassail and dissipation. It began and ended with a solemn assembly and feast-sabbath. The command for its observance and the directions concerning it are given in Lev. 23:33–44. Accounts of the way in which it was kept are to be found in Neh. 8:13–18; Hos. 12:9; Zech. 14:16–19.

The feast proper ended on the seventh day, but there was an eighth day observance, a Sabbath of rest and holy convocation, which really formed a part of it, and is referred to in verse 37 as "the last day, that great day of the feast," so supereminent above the other days was it. A custom prevailed during the seven days in which a priest brought water daily in a golden vessel from the pool of Siloam to the temple, followed by a jubilant procession, and poured it out on the altar while the *Hallel* (Ps. 93–98) was sung. This practice, by some, is supposed to have reference to the striking of the rock in the desert by Moses; by others to the rain for which they then prayed for the seed of the ensuing year; and by the Rabbis to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit promised in the days of the Messiah. On the eighth day this was intermitted, and then, when his words on that account would have the greatest effect, Jesus stood and cried: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The priest had poured out of his golden vessel only a small quantity of water. How limited was its supply—how inadequate as a means of refreshing—how poor a representation of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit! Christ likens every believer in him to the golden vessel that the priest had used, and from within him was to pour—not an insignificant measure—but "rivers of living water." The religion of the Jews was ceremonial. People depended upon the priests and their sacred vessels for their religious comfort. Not so was it to be in the new dispensation. Every believer was to be a sanctified vessel, purged of all sin and uncleanness, and filled with the Holy Ghost, which, in exhaustless streams, was to be poured out for the refreshment and healing of men. In thus making religion an inward, ever-active experience, instead of a passive submission to an outward ceremony, we have our first proof in this lesson that *Jesus was the Christ*—for never man spake like this man.

THE DISCUSSION.—The feast, as has been said, was a very joyful occasion. But something had occurred to change the character of this one. Instead of unthinking merry-making, those who have gathered to its festivities are whispering together over that solemn question: Is Jesus the Christ? No man dared speak openly of him for fear of the Jews—that is, the rulers—but that one thing was, after all, the absorbing topic. They gathered together in little knots, in grave and earnest debate, some contending that he was a good man, others that he was deceiving the people. But, guarded as they were in their conversation, suppressed as were their tones, the talk concerning him was so general that their voices, combined, could not be hid —"there was much murmuring among the people concerning him." 11–13. In the midst of the feast, when the discussion was probably at its height, Jesus suddenly appeared in the temple and taught. Then it soon became manifest who were for and who against him. It was objected to him:

1st. 15–18. "How knoweth this man letters (*learning*), having never learned?" 15. The "learning" to which they allude is his knowledge of Scripture. He was not a disciple of Hillel, had not been trained in any theological seminary, had not been recognized by any

of the Doctors of Divinity, and, therefore, was no authority in the teaching of Scripture. No one had set upon him a stamp of approval, warranting him sound on all Scriptural doctrine, and hence, those who had to have their Scriptural beliefs properly and officially labeled before they took them, felt qualmish about accepting those put forth by this one who talked so differently from the licensed venders of the truth. His reply was a cutting one. He says: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." It was not so in the different schools. Hillel had his own doctrine, and Gamaliel had his. It was their boast that they taught each his own system of knowledge. It was not their anxiety to find out and impart only what was God's will—not what would honor Him, but what would honor themselves. Christ,on the contrary, came to make known the will of God—not to secure a reputation for learning. Referring again to them, he said: "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory." It is always safe to beware of a man who gets up his creed first and goes to the Bible afterward, who is always talking about what "*I* believe," instead of saying: "Thus saith the Scriptures." "He that seeketh His glory that sent him"—that has no personal ends to gain—"the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." That is the true test ever. Those who hold up Christ, and Christ only, are the ones to follow.

Christ never had learned theology from the schools. When a child, we may be sure that he learned Scripture lessons at his mother's knee, and when he grew up his Heavenly Father opened them to him, so that he understood them as God himself understood them. And in them he showed a marvelous learning and understanding. He was more at home in them than the most learned of the scribes. He made plain some of the most vexed and intricate of the questions that had troubled those learned in the law. He was constantly quoting from the Scriptures, and he never quoted from anything else. He never cited history, or quoted poetry, or referred to art, or science, or mathematics, or letters. He was emphatically a man of one Book. And so, the second proof that we have in our lesson that Jesus was the Christ is, that "this man" knew the Scriptures beyond all possibilities of human knowledge—"having never learned."

2d.—21–24. Objection was made to Christ's being the Messiah, because he healed on the Sabbath day. He made it plainly appear that it was lawful to do so. Every male among the Jews had to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth. If that day fell on the Sabbath, the rite was still performed, though it involved "work." The law of circumcision superseded the law of the Sabbath. If that should do so—should not the law of Mercy? That was a mere legal observance—healing was an act of grace; that was a wounding—this a curing. In the fact that Jesus performed so many works of mercy upon the Sabbath,rescued it from being smothered under the formalism of the Jews, clearly showed that it was for man, and not man for it—demonstrated, indeed, that he was Lord of the Sabbath, we have the third proof in our lesson that Jesus was the Christ.

3d.—25–30. His Messiahship was disputed because: "We know this man, whence he is; but when Christ cometh no man knoweth whence he is." They *thought* they knew where he was from. They knew his parentage—though they did not know all the miraculous facts concerning it,and they supposed he was born in Nazareth. This objection was made by one of the several factions into which the gathered multitude was resolved in their dispute over the divinity of Jesus. From a wrong but natural construction of Dan. 7:13, some supposed that Christ, in his first appearance, would suddenly descend from heaven, from the secret paradise in which he was popularly supposed to reside. It was another Jewish notion that when the Messiah came he would not only be unknown to every one, but would himself be ignorant of

his divine origin and mission until Elijah should anoint him. Could this expectation have been much more literally fulfilled? He did not, indeed, come in the clouds from heaven, but their ignorance of his real origin could not have been much greater than it was. Those who made this objection did not, apparently, even know his birth-place—much less Himself. His answer to them is to that effect. You know me, but you do not know my origin—"who it is that sent me." If popular ignorance concerning the place and facts of the birth of Christ were indeed any evidence of his being the Messiah, (as they were not,) then we should have another proof that Jesus was actually the Christ.

From what has been set forth, it is evident that the "objections" to Christ as the real Messiah were really confirmations of his mission. But direct testimony was not wanting. We have in the lesson four distinct witnesses for him: 1. the people; 2. the officers; 3. the rulers; 4. Nicodemus.

THE PEOPLE.—40–44. "Many of the people, when they heard this saying,"—*these sayings*, it should be—"said, Of a truth this is the Prophet." His marvelous words had convinced "many of the people" that he was "the Prophet." Like the officers they saw that "never man spake like this man." But the people, thus convinced that he was "the Prophet," were not of the same mind as to what prophet he was. Some believed him to be the prophet predicted by Moses (Deut. 18:18), which they supposed meant the Messiah. The others may have thought that he was "the prophet" that was to be the forerunner of Christ. Mal. 4:5. The belief of the first class was founded, not only on the sayings of Christ, but, most probably, also on the miracles he did. For they said: "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" 31. Miracles were the natural accompaniments and proof of Christ's divine mission. To them he himself appealed when desiring to confirm John the Baptist in his faith. Matt. 11:1–5; see, also, John 14:10, 11. The hesitation of the second class to declare him the Christ arose from their ignorance of his true lineage and birth-place. 41, 42. He was to be, as they said, "of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem." Is. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Mic. 5:1, 2. How unconsciously they were bearing testimony to his being the Messiah! For he was not from Galilee, as they supposed, but had been cradled in the very town where they declared he must, according to prophecy, be born, and was, also, "of the seed of David." We have, therefore, to add three things to our proofs that Jesus was the Christ: 1. the character of his teachings—such as made even those opposed to him declare him to be a prophet, and others say he must be the Christ; 2. his miracles—more in number, and greater in power than ever were performed by any other, even the most favored of God's servants; 3. the prophecies concerning his birth and lineage—"of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem."

THE OFFICERS.—45–49. Their testimony was: "Never man spake like this man." "He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes." In this case so impressive were his words that they nullified the commands of the Jews. The officers felt their effect upon themselves, and saw how they influenced others, and dared not touch him. See, also, John 18:6. But some of his words were addressed more directly to them, though they were meant for the multitude, also. See 33–36. The intimation he there gave was soon reiterated (8:21), and was repeated once more, very tenderly then, however, to his disciples. 13:33. It is still another allusion to his coming death. Then, he says, they shall seek him, and shall not find him. He refers to the terrible judgments that were to come upon the nation; when they would cry for a deliverer, but would cry in vain. At this time he made a mere passing allusion to them, but subsequently he dwelt upon them more

clearly, and more at length. Luke 19: 37-44; 20: 16-18; 21: 20-28; 23: 27-31. And not only then did they seek and not find their Saviour, but ever since they have been looking for him in vain. Their Messiah has not yet come, nor will he ever come until they see him in the one they once crucified. Centuries of vain looking—and yet, how easy to find him! For it is said: "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened"; and no one has ever humbly sought and did not find; has ever knocked and it was not opened. To the proofs already adduced that Jesus was the Christ, we have to add that of prophetic knowledge of the future, as manifest in his annunciation of his own death and the judgments that were to come upon the Israelites.

THE RULERS.—47-52. They strengthen the case by also declaring their understanding that Jesus was not to come out of Galilee, though they went too far in saying: "Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Jonah was from Galilee; so, probably, was Nahum, Elijah, Elisha, and Hosea. Modern Jews are ashamed of the want of intelligence exhibited in this proverb; and some are living around the sea of Tiberias, thinking that there the Lord may come.

NICODEMUS.—The rulers ask: "Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?" The question so arrogantly and confidently asked is unexpectedly answered by one of their own number. It is not answered in a directly affirmative way, but Nicodemus replies in a way to indicate *his* faith in Christ by saying to this chalenge: "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" We see him first as a timid enquirer after truth, now as an open advocate of justice, and finally, as a public confessor of his faith, in his ministry over the dead body of his Saviour.

REMARKS.—How quickly the presence of Christ operated in making a division of that assembly. How quickly now does any assembly divide when he becomes the topic of conversation. Christ in the presence of all—apprehended by some—unknown to many. The Jews have him not, though they bind him, put him in prison, crucify, and bury him. The disciples have him, though their doors are bolted and barred against all entrance. To some he is only a man—to others, more happy than they, he is the veritable Son of God. He walks in the world unreal, invisible to many—a real, realized, comforting Presence to those who believe in him. He is either hidden or revealed, according to the spirit of men.

Wayside Flowers.

1.—"Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The Christian religion is not a mere selfish experience, gratifying only the one who partakes of it. It is a fountain that *must* run over and bless others. Acts 9: 36; Rom. 14: 7; 2 Cor. 9: 8; Eph. 2: 10; Col. 1: 10; 1 Tim. 6: 18; 2 Tim. 3: 17.

2.—Many men "seek" the Messiah; but they seek him in their own way, resolved so to find him or not at all. Is it any wonder that scientists say: "We can not find Him"! They stand at the door of creation and imperiously say: "If there be a God let him come forth that we may measure him." The Infinite must be sought in a way more humble than that. He will reveal himself to the most humble of mortals if he only really desires to commune with him—but to such demands never. Job 11: 7; Ps. 77: 19; Is. 55: 9; Rom. 11: 33, 34; Ps. 138: 6; Jas. 4: 6.

3.—"A little while" Jesus was with them. After that they should seek but not find him. Ah, the importance to them of that "little while!" It was their period of grace—their day, their hour, their moment of salvation. It passed unimproved. How long is *our* "little while"? Matt. 24: 37-42; Mark 13: 33-37; Luke 12: 35-40; 21: 34, 35; Heb. 10: 37.

4.—The way "to know of the doctrine" is to do the will of God—to surrender ourselves and our will to him—to be willing to be guided and taught by him. There is no adequate test of the truth of the doctrine of Christ but the test of experience. "*Taste and see that the Lord is good.*" Hos. 6: 3; Mal. 4: 2; Matt. 6: 24; John 7: 17; 8: 31, 32, 14-15-17, 20, 21; 1 Cor 2: 14; 2 Cor. 4: 3-6.

5.—"Never man spake like this man." And never book spake like the Word of God. "It measures all states and conditions of life; it is acquainted with every grief; it touches every chord of sympathy; it contains the spiritual biography of every heart; it is suited to every class of society, and can be read with the same interest by the king and the beggar, the philosopher and the child; and "it has a comfort for every sorrow and a balm for every wound." Ps. 19: 7-10; 119: 162; Rom. 15: 4; Eph. 5: 26; 2 Tim. 3: 15-17; 1 Pet. 1: 23

NOW.

"Seek and ye shall
FIND;
Knock and it shall
BE OPENED
Unto you."

HEREAFTER.

YE SHALL SEEK ME
And shall NOT
FIND ME,
And Whither I am
THITHER YE CAN NOT COME.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The great feast. Tell what it was for. Describe the tents made of leafy branches—how for seven days people lived in them on the streets and on the roofs of the houses. Tell what it was for—in memory of the time when the Jews were compelled to live in tents for forty years during their journey through the wilderness. How it was celebrated—joyously, with waving of palm branches, the making of sacrifices, the making of presents. It was the Jews' Fourth of July.

2.—The discussion that arose during the feast. People asking others what they thought about Christ. Did not dare to talk aloud for fear of the rulers. Some thought he was not Christ because no great man had ever taught him. That was proof that he was, for he knew letters "having never learned." Others thought he was not Christ because he healed on the Sabbath. The fact that he could heal at all showed that he was the real Messiah. Others said he was not because they knew his parents and where he was from, and they thought that when Christ came no one would know whence he came—thought he would come right down from heaven. They *didn't* know whence he was, for they thought he was from Galilee, whereas he was born in Bethlehem.

3.—The people thought he was the Prophet—the Messiah they expected because of his wonderful sayings, and his wonderful miracles. If he had been a bad man he could not have performed those miracles. What miracles did he perform? And then his teachings! Whenever he taught every body listened. The Pharisees sent some officers to take him, but they did not dare touch him because "never *man* spake like this man." But the rulers didn't believe in him, and said none of the rulers did. But there was one—Nicodemus. Recall how he came by night; describe how he now stood up for Jesus, and how afterward he cared for his body. Question the class and get them to tell the things which they know that prove that Jesus was the Christ.

MEMORY VERSE.

Seek Jesus, seek Jesus,
In childhood and youth,
For they that seek early shall find;
His word hath declared it,
How precious the truth!
The promise how loving and kind!

BLACKBOARD.

NEVER MAN SPAKE
LIKE THIS MAN.
I will Seek Him.

LESSON XXXV.—AUGUST 29, 1875.—FREEDOM BY THE TRUTH.

SCRIPTURE.—John 8: 28-36. Commit 28-36; Primary Verse, 34.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed:

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."—Is. 61 : 1.

TOPIC.—SPIRITUAL LIBERTY.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is.	**61 : 1-11**	**.....The Proclamation of Liberty.**
T. Col.	**1 : 1-14**	**.....Liberty Conferred by God.**
W. Rom.	**8 : 1-21**	**.....Liberty from Bondage of the Flesh.**
Th. 1 Cor.	**7 :17-24**	**..... The Service of Christ is Liberty.**
F. Jas.	**1 : 1-25**	**.....The Free Blessed in their Liberty.**
S. Gal.	**5 : 1-26**	**.....Liberty of Christ not License.**
S. 1 Pet.	**2 : 1-25**	**.....The Price of our Liberty.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY.—28, 29. Jesus said: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man." What did he refer to? Mark 15: 30. Had Christ spoken of this before? 3 : 14. Did he so speak of it afterward? 12: 32, 33. What would happen when he was "lifted up"? 28. Did any one believe on him because of his death on the cross? Luke. 23: 39-43; Matt. 27: 54; Luke 23: 48. Christ died that we might be free—free from what? Rom. 8: 2; Heb. 2: 15; Rom. 6: 18. Three great things to be free from! Are you free from them?

THE WAY TO LIBERTY.—30-32. What effect did the words of Jesus have? 30. What did he tell them? 31. What is meant by, "if ye continue in my word"? Must not only believe Christ, but obey him always. For how long a time does Jesus want you to serve him? What is the proof, according to this verse, that one is a disciple of Christ? To whom did Christ liken the one who serves him only for a little while? Matt. 13: 20, 21. What does Paul say about him? Heb. 10: 38, 39. What shall be given to the one who "continues" in his word? Rev. 2: 10. What is "the way to liberty"? 32, 36; 3: 14, 15.

THE FOE TO LIBERTY.—Who is the great foe to liberty? 43, 44. To what are men in bondage? 34. Have you ever felt that you *could* not do right? Paul, also, good as he was, felt so? Rom. 7: 15, 21. What keeps you from doing good? Prov. 5: 22. Whose servant then are you? Rom. 6: 16. Are people ever in bondage to sin without knowing it? 33. Is there any way that we can get free from the power of sin? 36. That means perfectly free—does it not?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY,—28, 29, Was the "lifting up" of the Son of man. Already the Saviour had thus clearly spoken of his approaching death upon the cross, and the necessity for it. 3: 14. Then he had said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." There were three reasons for that "must": 1. Either the sinner or the Saviour had to be lifted up. But "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ said to the two disciples journeying to Emmaus after his death, when their eyes were "holden" that they knew him not: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Luke 24: 26. And this he showed them by expounding the Scriptures, "beginning at Moses." He showed to them that what they considered his abasement was really his exaltation—that his shameful crucifixion was really his glorification. To the assembled disciples, when once again he appeared among them, he also said: "It behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This wonderful sacrifice of the Creator for the creature, of the King for his subjects, of the Son of God for man, was not a mere spasm of generous feeling. It had a place in the counsels of eternity. Our sacrifice was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"! Rev. 13: 8. The coming of that sacrifice was betokened all through the Old Testament. The light of all its inspiration is concentrated on the cross of Christ. Except for their marvelous illumination of that radiant object, they would have no light, no life,

no significance. How could the love of God be more strongly exhibited than by determining upon such a sacrifice, and, holding through ages to his purpose with such constancy! And how could the necessity of such a sacrifice be better shown. Christ must die. As Mr. Moody said in Edinburgh: "It was not a live lamb that was tied to the door-posts of the Israelites in Egypt—only its blood was sprinkled over them. It is not the life of Christ that saves—nor imitations of his life—but his death, his blood. The Bible is bound together by a scarlet thread—the blood runs all through it."

The second reason why Christ must be lifted up is given in our lesson: "*Then shall ye know that I am he*," etc. Ye shall *know*—not guess—not speculate—not be in any doubt. Jesus apparently, was speaking only to the Jews surrounding him, but, in reality, he was speaking to the world. By being lifted up upon the cross his divinity was to be made manifest. And who, indeed, can read the account of that crucifixion, of that divine resignation and patience, that sweet pity, that forgiving spirit, that thoughtful love, that great compassion, that extreme agony, and that triumphant: "*It is finished*," and not say with the centurion: "Truly, this was the Son of God"? Ah, we need not ask who! For as, in the midst of his distress, there were not wanting those with spirits malicious enough to wag their heads and rail at the divine sufferer, bidding him to come down from the cross, so there are those now whose worst passions are stirred by the mere mention of the crucified one. Come down from the cross? The wonder is that he stayed there! Happy for the sinner was it that those words awoke only divine pity, instead of divine wrath.

It was to be known that he was the Messiah from the signs and wonders that were to happen at the crucifixion. They were such that the centurion and they that were with him feared greatly, and exclaimed: "Truly this was the Son of God." Matt. 27:54. And they were not the only ones affected; for, "all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned." Peter, in reciting the events of that day, "pricked" the people "in their heart," so that they cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do"? Acts 2:37. Farther, it was to be known by the gift of the Holy Spirit, that was to descend upon his followers after his ascension. See, especially, John 16:7-11; Acts 2:41. And the time shall come when every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that this crucified one is the Son of God. Whether it shall be among the redeemed or among the lost, still shall every knee bow, and every tongue shall confess. There will be two ways of knowing—by experience of his mercy, or by experience of his wrath. Such will be the fearful power of the one, and such the exceeding greatness of the other, that no one then can doubt his divinity. What folly to wait until that time shall come—to court his wrath instead of soliciting his mercy! By "lifting up" the Son of man is his divinity to be proven. The higher we lift him up the more are we ourselves certain of it, and the more plainly does the world see it. Lift him up, then! Lift him up until he shall be exalted so high that no one can help but see him. Lift him up in the sight of a lost and perishing world, and men shall look upon this sinless sufferer, and shall say: "Truly this is the Son of God"—and so looking shall live.

By his lifting up men were also to know his essential unity with the Father. Mark the similarity in this address to the expressions used in the first chapter of John. There it was said: "The Word was with God"—here Jesus declares: "He that sent me is with me." There it was announced: "The Word was God"—here Jesus says (v. 19): "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father, also." But the important thing that Jesus means to bring out is that when he is crucified, then they shall

know that he is not forsaken of God. It is a warning to them not to judge by the agony of Gethsemane, by his being given up to his persecutors, by his being apparently abandoned by the Father, and by his shameful death; for in the light of the cross it would be seen that all these formed a part of God's eternal purpose.

THE WAY TO LIBERTY.—30–32. This was through faith and continuing in his word. It is said of the listening Jews: "Many believed on him." They did—in their perverse way. When he spoke of his being "lifted up," they saw not his crucifixion, but an exaltation to the throne of Israel. "When *ye* have lifted up," etc., they interpreted as a sort of command for them to put him there. And the rest of verses 28, 29, they supposed, meant that when that was done, the wisdom of his present policy would be most clearly exhibited. All their roseate dreams were rudely dispelled, however, when they learned next from his lips, that he was speaking, not of political, but of spiritual freedom. That accounts for their sudden change of temper, and for their desire to make way with him. They were believing in him, as they thought, but the real test of true belief is not in the first supreme moment of one's profession of faith. Time tests one's religious experience, as it tests all other things. It is one thing to believe in the Messiahship of Christ, and another thing to follow him. True belief is shown in continuing service. The deed of ourselves to Christ must contain no conditions — no power of revocation. The one who does *not* continue in his service is likened, by Christ, to the one who received the good seed into stony ground, who, "with joy received it, yet hath he no root in himself." Matt. 13:20, 21. God says: "He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved," and, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Matt. 24:13; Heb. 10:38. Those who "abide" in Christ (John 15:7) are those who ask what they will, and it shall be done unto them; and it is to him that is "faithful unto death" that is given a crown of life, (Rev. 2:10), and who will be presented "holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight." Col. 1:22, 23. Can we promise such a fidelity? Not, indeed, in our own strength. God's grace, alone, is "sufficient" for us. His strength is made perfect in our weakness, and we can strive on to the end only because his Spirit worketh "mightily" within us. 2 Cor. 12:9, 10; Col. 1:29. "The Lord is faithful who shall stablish you and keep you from evil." 2 Thess. 3:3.

By so continuing in his word—following out his precepts—"ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Christ himself is the great central truth, and the source of truth. 1:14; 14:6. He it is, and his Spirit, that makes us free. Gal. 4:3–5; 5:1; Rom. 8:15; 2 Cor. 3:17. Free from what? From the power and the curse of the law. Gal. 3:13; 4:5; 5:1. From the bondage of corruption. Rom. 8:21. From the bondage of man. 1 Cor. 9:19; Gal. 1:4. From vain, *i. e.* self-deceitful hopes and promises concerning the future, that can not be realized. 1 Pet. 1:18. From the power of sin. Rom. 6:7, 18, 22. From all iniquity. Tit. 2:14. From the fear of death. Heb. 2:15. Free from all these hampering limitations, is there any doubt of our ability to run the race that is set before us, enduring unto the end?

The condition of freedom is service. Paradoxical as is the statement, it is, nevertheless, true that we have "perfect liberty only in perfect submission." The Psalmist says: "I will walk at liberty," or, as the margin renders it, "at large." How? "For I seek thy precepts." Ps. 119:45. Isaiah announced the coming of Christ as a time when freedom should be given to captives; and Paul re-echoes the prophecy by declaring that where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Is. 61:1; 2 Cor. 3:17. And James exactly states the paradox in saying: "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, being not a forgetful hearer, *but a doer of the*

work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Jas. 1:25. Freedom in service—liberty in submission! The seeming contradiction has too many analogies to be very puzzling. The engine that draws the train is at "perfect liberty" only when it is confined to the iron rails upon which it moves. Let it fly the track, and it either destroys itself, or is in "bondage" immediately to a thousand obstructions. The ship is at perfect liberty on the sea, but how soon is that liberty destroyed if it be beached upon the shore. Liberty only comes in following out the highest law of our nature, and that is done only in obeying God. Any other course is self-destructive, and has immediate and painful limitations. Our government is a polity of freedom—to those who will obey its laws. Every man's freedom under it is absolutely guaranteed by the fact that it restrains—not liberty—but license. The laws are unfelt and unrestrictive to every upright man, but they bind manacles and close the prison doors upon every disturber of the public peace. In this case, as in God's government, perfect liberty comes of perfect submission.

THE FOE TO LIBERTY,—33-36, Is the arch-enemy whose wiles ensnared our first parents. The 34th verse of our lesson has its interpreting parallel in 1 John 3:8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil." The converse truth immediately follows: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." By "committing sin" is meant the continuing in sinful practices. That is natural to the unregenerate—distasteful and unnatural to those who have become the sons of God. By that first introduction of sin into the world our nature has been so wronged that now "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It has become so corrupt that one cried out: "What is man, that he should be clean, and he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Job 15:14. And David, in looking into his own heart, was led to say: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Ps. 51:5. Solomon says: "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," and Christ declared that "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries," etc. Prov. 28:26; Matt. 15:19. The heart has become the devil's kingdom. And how hard it is to get free when once he has established his dominion over it. Paul says: "What I would, that I do not; what I hate, that do I"—"the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Our bondage to sin could be no more strongly expressed, and yet, each one of us who has struggled to be free from its enslavement, can testify that Paul has put it none too forcibly. Those who are bound and make no effort to get free, never feel the constraints of their cords. It is only those who struggle to be at liberty that are wounded and bruised by them, and that know how strong they are. Sin is a terrible slavery, as many a striving Christian knows—so terrible a slavery that many, as has been quaintly remarked, stay in the seventh chapter of Romans years, sometimes, before they get into the eighth, and sometimes never get there.

The Jews denied that ever they were in bondage to any man, construing his words to refer to political subjection. But even this was false. The helmets of the Roman soldiers upon the streets gave them the lie. They said unto Pilate: "We have no king but Cæsar." 19:15. Neither was what they said true of their fathers; for they had been in subjection to the Egyptians, the Babylonians, and the Syrians. The only way that they could justify their remark was by the fiction that they did not recognize the supremacy of Cæsar—that he was king *de facto*, but not *de jure*.

They well represent that class who are in bondage to sin, but are not conscious of it—who say: "We are as good as the majority of men"; who think there is no need for them to repent, and who guess, "if they do about as they ought to, it will come out all right." Moralists are

they who never cheat their neighbors; who hold themselves to the strictness of the law, and are not applicants for the mercy of the gospel. They know not that by the operation of the very law to which they appeal they are "sold under sin," for by the law is no man justified. Christ divides the world into two classes—"the children of bondage," and "the children of promise." The children of bondage are those who say that Abraham is their father—who appeal to the law. The children of promise are those who rely for their justification on the deeds of him who is greater than Abraham. The best commentary on verses 34 and 35 is Gal. 4:22–31. The servant has no inheritance, and is cast out. "But we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

If the Son shall make us free, we shall be free indeed. Not seemingly free—but actually so; not politically free, but spiritually free. "Free indeed"! That is a great promise. Many want to be free, and can not. They struggle, but in vain. All effort seems hopeless. But read aright this promise: "If the Son shall *make* you free, ye shall be free indeed." "*Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God*"?

Wayside Flowers.

1.—We are redeemed from our bondage to sin, not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Rev. 5:9.

2.—"Every knee shall bow," and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." His day of triumph is surely coming. It is a solemn question whether we are to be partakers of that triumph or subjects of it. Ps. 2:6-9; 110:1; Dan. 7:13, 14; Rom. 14:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:24-27; Phil. 2:10, 11; Heb. 10:12, 13; Rev. 5:13; 11:15-17.

3.—Let no one say I can not live a Christian life because so much is required of me. Much indeed is required—more than can be performed by mere flesh and blood. But the Scriptures glow with promises of the help of the Spirit. Any one who enters upon the Christian service with his whole heart receives at the outset a guaranty of his being able to overcome all things. Dan. 3:17, 18; John 17:15; Rom. 8:28-30; 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; 10:13; Phil. 1:6; 2 Tim. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 3:10.

4.—Christ could say that the Father had not left him alone, "for I always do those things that please him." We also, shall never lack his presence if we do those things that are well pleasing in his sight. Mark 16:20; Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 14:3; 18:9, 10; Rom. 15:18, 19; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:17; Heb. 13:5, 6.

5.—One of the best of proofs that the Christian religion is true is that it delivers from the bondage of sin. Witnesses without number could be summoned who would declare that whereas they once were bound, now they are free — who have overcome and are overcoming the evil within them; not through any power of their own, but through the help of the Holy Ghost. Rom. 8:37–39; 1 Cor. 15:54, 57; Eph. 5:23, 25–27; 2 Tim. 4:7; 1 John 4:4; 5:4, 5; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14–17; 12:11.

HYMN.

Like him whose fetters dropped away
When light shone o'er his prison,
My soul, new touched by Mercy's ray,
Hath from its chains arisen.

And shall the soul thou bid'st be free
Return to bondage? Never!
Thee, O my God, and only thee
I live for, now and ever.

BLACKBOARD.

If THE SON Shall Make
YOU FREE
Ye shall be
FREE INDEED.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—*The Price of Liberty.* Sometimes persons have been slaves. When they were slaves to a bad master their lot was a very hard one. They could not of themselves get free. Either the master would have to let them have their freedom or some one would have to purchase it for them, else they would always be slaves. The evil one has made slaves of us. Whenever, he wants to he makes us angry, or hateful, or selfish, and sometimes compels us even to lie, or steal, or swear. He makes men rob, and fight, and murder. It is because he makes slaves of boys and girls that they say: "I can't help getting angry;" "I can't help swearing;" "I can't help doing wrong." Who is it that has

made you feel that you can't do right and that you must do wrong? The Bible tells. It says: "He that committeth sin is of the devil." Every one that has him for a ruler has a hard master. He can't get free of himself, and the devil won't set him free. Is there any one that can purchase freedom for us? Yes, there is One, and he has already paid the price — counted it out in blood-drops. Read 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

2.—*The Way to Liberty.* That is by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and "continuing in his word." Jesus has paid our freedom-money. The first question is — will we accept our liberty? We can continue to be slaves if we have a mind to. If we want to be free let us first believe on Jesus and then continue to do just as he wants us to do. If we do that it will grow easier and easier for us to be good. We will find that we can say: "I can help it" instead of "I can't help it." Christ will give strength to overcome.

3.—*The Foe to Liberty*—is sin. That takes away the power of being good. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." When robbers come into a house they bind the man so that he can not help himself, and they do just as they please with him. Sin does just that way with us. Did you ever see a poor drunkard lying in the gutter perfectly helpless? Sin had bound him so that he had no control of himself. Did you ever see one get so angry that he did not know hardly what he was about? Sin had got a strong hold upon him. So strong are the cords that sin binds us with that we can't break them. But our lesson says: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Who can make us free? Free from what? If he shall make us free we shall be — what? Sin will have no power over us if he takes away our bonds. We will then be able to do as God wants us to — we shall be free indeed.

MEMORY VERSES.

Jesus is the children's Saviour!
'Twas for them he shed his blood;
Died that poor, enslaved sinners
Free might be before their God.
Dying Saviour!
Bearing thus our sinful load.

BLACKBOARD.

Whosoever Committeth Sin
Is the
SERVANT OF SIN.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

INASMUCH as many of our readers do not have access to those theological treatises that show Christ in prophecy, we feel sure that they will welcome the article by Dr. Patton on "The Old Testament Predictions of Christ." We also feel certain that the more favored few, to whom such works are familiar, will also feel indebted to the Dr. for his clear, methodical, condensed statement of the argument. Rarely has it been put so concisely and so well. The teachers will find the facts and the method of treatment indispensable aids both to their own mastery of the subject, and to their presentation of it in the class, in connection with the fourth lesson of the month.

ON this side of the water nothing could be more ridiculous than the fuss that was made in England over the invitation that was given to Moody and Sankey to hold a meeting at Eton School. The school is a famous one. There the sons of the nobility are educated. When it became rumored that the two revivalists were going to Eton there was a hubbub. The matter was brought up in both houses of Parliament, and enquiries were made as to whether the head governor of Eton had given permission to hold the meeting, and whether Gladstone had given Moody an introductory letter to the officials of the institution. Under the pressure brought to bear by the Established Church some six hundred boys signed a protest against their coming. Three hundred, not to be driven in this way, signed a petition to have them come. Such vigorous Christianity as these men preach, it was feared, would affect the boys as badly as real virulent small pox—they might never get over it. Eton boys have to be gently inoculated

with religion by the Established Church in a way that won't interfere with betting, boating, and horse-racing. Moody and Sankey held a meeting, however, in the town, which was largely attended by the boys and their instructors, and we do not see that the British constitution is *very* badly shattered after all.

ABOUT five thousand people were reported to be in attendance on the Sunday-school camp-meeting at Winnipesaukee. Dr. Vincent, as usual, showed himself to be a generalissimo fully equal to all emergencies, and made the Normal Class the central and most interesting feature of the occasion. But while the exercises as a whole were good, some things occurred which people are disposed to criticise, the most prominent of which was the address of Rev. W. H. H. Murray, of Boston. That was very unpalatable. He declared that for the salvation of souls the Bible, with the exception of the four Gospels, was of very little value, and that, therefore, with that exception it was of no use in our Sabbath-schools. We are glad to say that the declaration met with frequent and indignant condemnation. Every teacher, whose privilege it has been to follow the international series from the New Testament to the Old, and from the Old to the New, knows better, and could close his mouth with the testimony of their experience. It all depends, Mr. Murray, on whether one can see the Christ that is hidden in the Old Testament, but whose presence there is made so plain by the New. What a host of people would like to protest against such a doctrine!

WE could wish that the Sunday-school Association of New York might be duplicated in every city. That organization is indefatigable in securing the best men to give addresses on Sunday-school topics, to expound the lessons and to carry on Normal classes. It is a stimulative power felt all through the city and for a large region round about. So carefully are its speakers selected that the Sunday-school people always turn out, for they are sure of hearing something good. It has a "Superintendent's Class," a "Primary Teachers' Class," a "Superintendents' Social Meeting," and a library and exchange reading room. Other places once in a while are stirred up by a convention or an institute. New York has the incitement of good instruction and fraternal gatherings all the year round. And what is done in that city can be readily repeated in others. All it needs is to get men like E. C. Wilder for president, and see that the various committees are composed of members who will not expect their "influence" will take the place of necessary work.

THERE is to be a change in the *Sunday School Times*. On the first of next month I. Newton Baker, who has been so long connected with it, resigns the helm into the hands of Rev. Henry Clay Trumbull. We are sorry to lose Mr. Baker and glad to welcome Mr. Trumbull. We shall have to use a handkerchief with one hand and shake hands with the other. In such a distressing predicament we hardly should know what to say that would be *apropos* had not Mr. Trumbull on a certain other change in which *we* were interested, taught us what was the clever thing to do. We, therefore, remark: "No paper is likely to gain anything by losing Mr. Baker; nor can one be the loser if it secures Mr. Trumbull." *That* makes us even!

THAT it is possible to overrate the value of *memoriter* instruction there are few that are inclined to deny. While attempts without number have been made to explain that very few Sabbath-school workers deride the memorizing of Scripture, but only insist that it shall be understood before it is memorized, still the false cry is made that the modern Sunday-school does not favor the committing of the lessons to memory. As a sample of the futility of

"learning by heart" what has not yet been got into the head, we append the written answer of a boy of eleven who had for four years attended an English parish school. The question was: "What is thy duty towards God?" The catechistical answer to this he had during his four years glibly and satisfactorily recited. From an inspection of it as written, it will be seen how little an idea he had of it, and how little prospect there was of his ever getting the tangle straightened out:

"My duty toads God is to bleed in him to fering and to loaf withold your arts, withold my mind, withold my soul and with my sernth to whirchp and to give thinks to put my old trash in him, to call upon him, to onner his old name and his world, and to save him truly all the days of my life's end."

Another wrote out his belief as follows:

"I believe in God the allmighty maker of Heaven and in Jesus Christ the only son of God who was conseved by the Holy Gost born of the vurgen Mary soffed under panshed plited was Squest fied ded and beded he descended into heel and the third day he rose again from the ded he descended into Heaven and setted hat the right hand of God the father all might maker of Heaven and earth the see and all that in them is and rested upon the Seventh day and Howard it."

THE fifty-ninth anniversary of the Sunday-school of the first Baptist Church of Worcester, Mass., was recently celebrated, the entire day being given to the exercises. There were the usual annual reports, and, besides, responsive readings, a "concert" by the primary department, singing, addresses, and, in the evening, a Sunday-school praise meeting, and more short addresses. Every school ought to celebrate its anniversary. The fact that it is annually observed would be an advertisement of the high estimation in which the Sabbath-school is held. The Fourth of July not only touches off a lot of useless explosives, but kindles the fires of patriotism in young hearts, never to die out. An anniversary day in each Sabbath-school would cultivate corresponding feelings of affection for it. The children would be warmed by the thought: "This is *our* day—*our* school—what pains are taken to please *us!*" We have always pitied the boy whose birthday was not made to him the golden day of the year, slipping by without tokens of love or remembrance, no green oasis in a desert of monotony. Almost as much — for nothing is quite so pitiable as a disregarded child—do we pity the Sunday-school whose mission is so little thought of that it is not worth one day of high regard and recognition from the church.

THE Congregational Home Missionary Society is doing an excellent work in the planting of Sunday-schools. In its last report it gives 80,750 as the total of new scholars brought in for the fiscal year just ended. Taking fifty scholars as the probable average for the sparse districts where its new schools are located, and the number of schools planted during the year was 1,615. Its Western Secretary, justly proud of this showing, furnishes these figures to the *Advance*. But did he not make a woeful blunder in saying that this exhibit was only 25,000 less than that of the American Sunday-school Union? The latter Society has gathered in 216,993 scholars for the past year, and for the past five years has annually averaged 251,835. Unless the figures are wrong the secretary has done the Union an unintentional injustice. We are glad, however, that the quiet work of the Home Missionary Society has been brought to light, and hope that it will be a stimulus to all similar labor. Ought not the Congregationalists, by the way, to have an efficient Sunday-school secretary to match Vincent, of the Methodists, Tyler, of the Presbyterians, and Randolph, of the Baptists?

THE Sunday-school parade in Brooklyn this year was larger and more enthusiastic than ever. Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler says that there is one day in the year when the inhabitants of Brooklyn feel that they are citizens "of no mean city." Of course, this exceptional day for self-congratulation is the day given up to the children—a day which

Dr. Cuyler calls: "St. Children's Day," and "The Festival of the Innocents." Fifty-thousand children in procession, and two-hundred thousand people as witnesses of this beautiful Sunday-school marvel. These are the statistics. Brooklyn blossoms with childhood on that day. No wonder that people come from far and near to see the fascinating spectacle! The city has sanctioned it—not officially, that we know of—but it has become a festival of such universal adoption, that the officials hang out a propitiatory sign, in the flags with which they deck City Hall. The children have conquered one of the largest cities in the Union, and for one day in the year are supreme in it. And there is not another city in the land that would not also surrender, if the little ones would only mass themselves for the conquest, as they did in Brooklyn. We hope to chronicle the taking of others in this way.

Sunday School Gleanings.

It was most felicitously said by Talmage: "Show me the track of the child's shoe, and I will show you the footsteps of the coming man."———Mr. Spurgeon says that at Grotto del Cano he saw persons let down an unhappy dog into a well impregnated with carbonic acid gas to exhibit its effect, and then, when he was well asphixiated, draw him up and bring him to by pouring cold water over him. "That," remarked Mr. Spurgeon, "is just like some ministers I know, who are always letting down their congregations into wells of doubts and errors, and then drawing them up again and reviving them with drops of the water of life." It seems to us as if we had seen some Sunday-school teachers go through the same performance with their classes, and, if we recollect aright, a class not long ago was formed in Cincinnati to go through the experience every Sunday! Does the *Sunday School Times* remember?———The *Christian at Work*, speaking with reference to the teacher whose preparation is insufficient to enable him to occupy the allotted time, recommends that it be pointed out to him "how foolish the minister would look, if, when he was expected to fill half an hour with his sermon, he should run out of material in twenty minutes, and then have to stand gazing at his congregation the other ten"! Ah, but no ministers have had the drill on it that some teachers have had, or they might do it with composure!———Some one across the water declares that the main requisites for a review are "chalk and cheerfulness." Not so. One may have plenty of chalk and smile like an imbecile, and then not succeed. Besides having them he wants to be clear, correct, concise, child-like, and does not want to be crude, confusing, or crotchety. ———Rev. W. F. Crafts, in a pastoral letter to his church, repudiates the idea that the Sabbath-school is an independent institution, and defines it as "The Bible Service of the Church," where young and old may study the Bible together, under the charge of the pastor and superintendent.———The *Sunday Guest* tells of a class, one of the boys of which plead for ten minutes more of time for the lesson, saying: "Our teacher has so much to tell us and we tell her so much that we can not get through in half an hour." That was a compliment worth having. If some others should express *their* minds, it would be in a request to close a little sooner—"teacher gets through so quick."———The *Independent*, a while ago, wisely suggested that if a teacher were asked a question in the class which he could not answer, he had better confess his ignorance and pass on to the next point. As it is impossible for a teacher to know everything, there is no harm in his scholars

finding it out. But it won't do to say "I don't know" too often. As Ralph Wells says: "'My dear, I don't know,' and 'my dear. I don't know' may lead the child to suppose you 'don't know'—anything."———In Tennessee they call a school that has no more than five or six parents in it out of a church membership of about sixty, "an orphan Sunday-school." Not a few can lay claim to that title in localities more northern.——— *Zion's Herald* thinks it is a vain delusion that the children "get about all they need of religious instruction in the Sabbath-school," and wants to see them in church once more. Let it be certain that the church will add anything to what they now get and they will come. ———The Sunday-school man of the *Standard* (A. L. Vail, we suspect) noticed a man exceedingly busy with Bible, Concordance, and lesson paper, piling up "notes" until he had enough for "a good square sermon." "We began to suspect," he says, "that he must be the teacher of some tough Bible-class with shrewd old heads in it. It turned out that he taught *three boys*." It is his opinion, and ours, too, that that teacher had simply a just conception of his work.——Dr. Vincent does not by any means think that the Sunday-school is an adequate substitute for home religious training. He says in the *Normal Class*: "Sunday-schools are excellent in their appointed place and work. But they must not be looked upon as a kind of spiritual laundry, where children's morals may be sent for a weekly wash. Parental responsibility can not be thus lightly shifted."

Sunday School Work.

It is reputed that Hon. Willard Hall, President of the Second National Sunday School Convention, held in Philadelphia in 1833, is still living at Wilmington, Del., having passed his ninety fourth birthday last December. He graduated at Harvard in 1799, and for many years was Vice-president of the American Sunday School Union.——— In the State Convention held at Indianapolis, some funny things transpired. When the members of a certain committee were announced, a man arose in the gallery and said with great impressiveness: "The good brother named for the La Porte district is in the penitentiary"! The effect, as may be imagined, was startling. A brother explained that the appointee was the chaplain of the Northern Prison—and then there was some smiling.———The *Standard* announces that Dr. Warren Randolph, the Sunday-school secretary of the Baptist denomination, has received a very urgent call to the First Baptist Church of Chelsea, Mass., and that he will probably accept it. If we were in the Dr.'s place, we should stay in the Sunday-schools of all the churches rather than in the pulpit of only one of them. His present work calls the loudest.———Hon. Schuyler Colfax was at Indianapolis, at the convention, and was received with great applause. Twenty-five years of his life, he said, he had spent in the Sunday-school as a scholar and a worker, and no part of his life was so memorable to him. It is a happy coincidence that Hon. Alexander Stephens had a similar popular reception at the Georgia convention, at Union Point, and made a statement somewhat similar. If the child shall only join the hands of the North and the South they will remain forever clasped in indissoluble, fraternal union.———Miss Sarah Stone has been the teacher of the infant class in the Baptist church at Watertown, Mass., for the last thirty-two years. Her first generation of scholars have long ago matured, and she is engaged now with the children's children. At the last annual festival of the school her "infants," young and old, gave her an enthusiastic ovation, presented her with pleasant tokens of their affection, and "addressed"

her without mercy. When Miss Stone was enrolled as a teacher she enlisted for the war. Her years of experience has constantly made her increasingly valuable, and now the children even of the third generation rise up to call her blessed. How much honor and gratification she would have missed had she only served for one summer!———It is said that during the time of strawberry festivals a good many Sunday-schools were filled up—or the scholars were.——The union teachers' meeting at Boston, under the lead of Rev. H. M. Parsons, has been so successful that an offshoot has been planted in Cambridgeport under the fostering care of the same competent leader. As the *Congregationalist* says, it is a pity that that man can not be indefinitely multiplied.———The Y. M. C. A. of this city has a Sunday-school in Lower Farwell Hall, every Sunday at 3 P. M., which it calls "Everybody's Sunday-school." That is uniform with the title of its paper, which it calls "*Everybody's Paper*," and both are appropriately named.———One Sabbath, lately, the Sunday-schools of Charlestown, Mass., Catholic as well as Protestant, omitted their usual services, and joined in a grand union Sunday-school temperance meeting in the great pavilion on Monument Grounds. Vice-President Wilson presided, and made a stirring address, and was followed by the pastors of the several churches. The impression made by that occasion will not be readily effaced.——At South Boston, also, they had a "Children's Temperance Day," but that, however, fell on a Saturday. Twelve schools, turning out as many hundreds, joined in a temperance procession, with the usual accompaniments of flags and music, and marched to Independence Square, where they dedicated a new fountain with appropriate ceremonies.———Out of the "immense revenue" from pew-rents received by Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, $13,000 is annually devoted to the maintaining of its Sunday-schools—a liberality not only great, but wise as it is great.

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—John E. Miller, who superintends the M. E. Sunday-school at Evanston, Ill., hands to us a "Sunday-school Temperance Pledge" that is beautifully gotten up. It is a card printed on a card, the pledge being surrounded by leaves and blushing roses. We take the liberty of advising our readers to send (with stamp) for a sample. The pledge itself is as follows:

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEMPERANCE PLEDGE.

I hereby solemnly promise to abstain from the use of all intoxicating liquors as a beverage, from the use of tobacco in any form, and from all profanity.

Signed, ...

Evanston, Ill.,.....1875.

—In Nebraska they do the same thing a little differently. There they have two cards, on one of which is the pledge and on the other is an acknowledgment on the part of the teacher that he has received it. I. P. Gage, the statistical secretary, sends us samples of both. Around each are the texts: "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 6: 10; "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink." Hab. 2: 12. "Drunkards shall come to poverty." Prov. 23: 20; and "Woe to the drunkards." Is. 28: 1. The pledge and its acknowledgment read as follows:

I do give my honorable word of promise to my Sabbath-school teacher, that I will never sell liquor, and that I will never drink intoxicating drinks.

Name.....

Place of Residence.....

Date.....

Received from ..... his honorable word of promise that he will never sell liquor, and that he will never drink intoxicating drinks.

.....

.....

—A concordance, besides being somewhat costly and too bulky for pocket use, is not so good in studying topics as a "Bible Text Book." In using the former one is confined to special words, and sometimes it is a tedious hunt to get at the knowledge sought for through them, and when one has got it he is not sure he has it all, or even the most important part of it. The Text Book is a concordance of texts, and they are arranged under the topical heads to which they severally belong. With the aid of this, one can study the Bible by topics as recommended by Mr. Moody, each topic being a Bible reading on the subject indicated by it. The best Bible Text Book, according to our notion, is that issued by the American Tract Society, and is to be had either separately or with its "Teacher's Bible.

LITERATURE.

Rev. Norman Macleod, D. D., possesses to the full the art of story telling. A really good story-teller does not depend upon startling situations nor tragic incidents to excite the interest of his hearers. Indeed, just so far as one does that he abandons real art and falls back on mechanism. It is the charm of the best fiction writers that they take common things and idealize them—or, rather, help us to see them in their true light, and so show that nothing is really common or trivial. Such is the effect of the story of *The Starling* as told by Dr. Macleod. The incidents in it are very simple. A retired sergeant to please his only child teaches a pet starling to say a few words. One Sabbath the minister passing by is horribly scandalized to hear the bird speak, and demands that it be instantly killed. The sergeant refuses, for, besides not sharing in the narrow superstitions of his neighbors, the starling is specially endeared to him now that the little boy is dead for whose pleasure the bird was trained. Then comes church persecution for his refusal, the alienation of friends, poverty, sickness — but triumph. The incidents are simple—but what a glimpse he gives us in Dr. Porteus of ecclesiastical bigotry, in Peter Smellie of respectable sly intrigue, in Jock Hall of an original "ne'er-do-weel," capable after all of doing most nobly, and in Sergeant Mercer of a stainless, upright, simple Christian integrity that wins our affection as well as conquers the opposition of his minister. New York: Dodd & Mead. $1.50.

Types and Emblems are a collection of Spurgeon's sermons, preached on Sunday and Thursday evenings at his "Tabernacle" in London. The subjects are such as naturally fall under the titles chosen for them — "The Star of Jacob," "The Broad Wall," "The Only Door," "Royal Emblems for Loyal Subjects," "The Helmet," etc. Mr. Spurgeon's style and method are so well known, even on this side of the water, that there is no occasion to speak of or commend them. They are already assured of an audience, and this book will be sure to have purchasers. New York: Sheldon & Company. $1.25.

The Four Gospels in One is another continuous narrative in the exact words of the Scripture of the events given in the New Testament. The author, R. A. Campbell, has attempted to present them in chronological order, and has divided the work into sections with headings showing the facts that follow, and, as nearly as may be, indicating the time and place of their occurrence, and the gospels from which the account is taken. Any student will find such a book useful. It saves considerable thumbing in order to get at what would be the joint narrative of all the gospels. St. Louis: Henry W. Brand & Co. $1.50.

AMONG the contributions to Sabbath-school song literature we very highly esteem *Echoes of Zion*, edited by W. F. Sherwin. As would be inferred from its name, it is not a book of entirely new songs, but a compilation of some of the best things new and old. Both music and hymns are exceptionally good, and are fitted for prayer and praise meetings as well as the Sunday-school. New York: Horace Waters & Son.

PAMPHLETS.

The Star Book; Containing a Ritual for Juvenile Temperance Societies, with Appropriate Songs and Hymns. Edited and published by Mrs. D. A. Beale, Janesville, Wis. Price, 15 cts.; $12.00 per hundred.

The Illustrated Annual. Phrenology and Physiognomy, 1875. New York: S. R. Wells. Price, 25 cents.

Half-Hour Recreations in Natural History. Division First. Part 5. Insects of the pond and stream. By A. S. Packard, Jr. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. Chicago: W. G. Holmes. Price, 25 cts.

Half-Hour Recreations in Popular Science. Dana Estes, Editor. No. 13. Boston: Estes & Lauriet. Chicago: W. G. Holmes. Price, 25 cents.

Marcy's Sciopticon Manual. Fifth Edition, Revised. Philadelphia: J. L. Marcy. Price, 50 cts.

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THE

NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOTOR.

BY REV. J. M. GREGORY, LL. D., REGENT ILLINOIS INDUSTRIAL UNIVERSITY.

THERE are cases where the superintendent is a mere cypher, and the school remains unmade, or perhaps continues to run with lessening speed in the ruts worn during the previous administration. But the general fact remains true, and no school of marked character and efficiency can be found where the superintendent is himself a failure. Let this truth be held firmly in mind. Its force can not be avoided, and ought not to be forgotten. Good teachers of rare powers and perseverance will make good classes in any school, but the school as a whole can not escape the pervasive power of the superintendent's character and work. His very position at the head and front lends to his presence a power for good or evil. His voice utters the word of command, and at the same time gives the key note for all the exercises. His spirit creeps into the class-work, helping or hindering. His energy inspires or his apathy chills all. He is too prominent to be neglected, too pervasive to be escaped. He may resign, but till he does that, his is the paramount influence.

Let not this truth frighten any one who may be called to the work. A man who feels himself incompetent may sometimes be constrained to accept the superintendency because there is no one else to be had who is more fit; but let him not forget the law—*the superintendent makes the school.* He can not evade its power. He need not make a failure. Let him accept the full and certain responsibility of the position, and humbly determine to do his best. This resolve will give him confidence, and win for him the co-operation of pastor, parents, and teachers.

It is not asserted that the superintendent does all the work, or even plans it all. The attempt to do this would be as fatal a blunder as for a general to attempt to do all the fighting. Such a commander would rob his officers of their just honor and influence, and turn their help into a hindrance. So the superintendent who attempts too much personal service degrades his teachers from their position, discourages their zeal, and makes of their efforts an interference instead of an efficient co-operation.

Under its truest conception, the great work of the Sunday-school is done in the classes. All else is subordinate and auxiliary to that. The public exercises may be the more imposing, but the class work is the more important.

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When one enters a great manufactory the eye is dazzled and confused with the mass of machinery. Long lines of shafting filled with wheels turn overhead. Belts stretch in all directions to complicated machinery full of gearing, wheels, and cylinders, cams and connecting rods, moving slowly or swiftly, with every variety of motion, and with a roar that deafens. Following along some line of connections, from the wheels that are driven to the wheels that drive, one arrives at last at the great water-wheel in its dark, damp dungeon, tumbling slowly amid the splashing waters. Every where is motion, but no where is work accomplished. Now let us turn our back on the huge wheel, and trace the path to the other end of the line of connected machinery. We come at length to the little spindles from whose whirling points flies the twisted thread, or to the nimble shuttles flying back and forth leaving at each flight a thread to be woven into the web. We have found at last the working points of all the magnificent array. It is for the sake of these little spindles and shuttles that all the rest exists. The great tumbling wheel, the gearings, belts, and cams find their explanation and use in these working pieces. In vain all the rattle and roar, all the motion and power, if the spindle is not brought into full and effective contact with the wool, or if the shuttle leave not its thread among the warp. So in the school the working points are found where the teacher meets face to face his class and brings the truth to bear on the children's hearts. All else is machinery, power-generating or power-conducting it may be, but of little avail if the true working pieces are absent. What would be thought of the foreman, who, forgetful of this, should turn on his power and neglect to bring his spindles into contact with the wool, or what shall we say to the Sunday-school superintendent, who, underrating his teachers' work, shall keep the machinery of his school in action with mere pointless general exercises, fancying that because he himself is in motion, and all is noisy with motion around him, the school is doing its best?

The value of general exercises is not meant to be denied. They are inspiring and power-creating. They help to give tone and direction to the work of the day. And there may be cases where, from the difficulty of obtaining competent teachers, the superintendent may properly undertake to give instruction to the school through the means of the general exercises. But these cases are the exceptions, not the rule. The superintendent makes the school, but he makes it as the great water wheel spins the thread and weaves cloth, as a general fights the battle—through the power and direction he gives to the immediate workers. Let both sides of this great truth be insisted on, lest the superintendent or others underrate his real responsibility, or lest, on the other side, he underestimates the importance of the class work, and be tempted to abridge it as some superintendents have done, greatly to the detriment of their schools.

Christ's great maxim that whosoever will be chief must be "the servant of all," finds full illustration in the Sunday-school superintendent. He rules by serving, and works by helping others work. It is this spirit of universal service which marks the good superintendent. He makes much of his teachers and causes each one of them to feel that the superintendent appreciates his work and is anxious to help him do it. They feel the power of his sympathy and are doubly anxious to accomplish well a work which they know that he is watching for as well as they. In the teacher's meeting, in all the private consultations and in all the public exercises, they see that he is anxious, not to push them aside and to substitute his own work for theirs, but is constantly attempting to clear and pave the way for them, helping them to prepare the lesson, to gain the hearts and attention of their pupils.

Under a great general, common soldiers become heroes. Catching their

leader's spirit they borrow something of his greatness of soul, and become fit agents for the accomplishment of his plans. So the true superintendent breathes his own spirit into the poorest of his teachers and renders them useful if not excellent.

All this, it will be observed, requires heart-power rather than head-power. Not that talent, and learning, and eloquence are not desirable in a superintendent, but they are not the most important qualities, nor indeed wholly indispensable. The more learning and talent he has the more helpful he can be; but with an humble, hearty, self-sacrificing spirit—a willingness to serve, and with a warm, sincere devotion to his work, he may command the talent of others to supply any lack of his own, and win a great victory just where the talented superintendent makes a splendid failure—by the over-use of his own power, and the under-use of the powers of other people.

Finally, if our proposition that "the superintendent makes the school" be true, then it follows that all considerable advance in Sunday-school work must be accompanied, if not led, by an advance in the skill and efforts of the superintendents. This might have been easily inferred from the fact that they are the recognized leaders in the enterprise. But it gains a more telling force when it comes out of a careful review of the vital and creative power which the superintendent holds over the school. And the history of Sunday-schools is full of illustrations of this truth. Schools have flourished or declined, according to the skill and tact of their successive leaders. Nor is it always the eloquent talker nor the great Sunday-school convention worker who has proved the most successful superintendent. The constant temptation of such men is to do too much, and to overshadow all others by their too obtrusive presence. The true superintendent is one who works with and through others, helping and inspiring—like the great water-wheel hidden from sight, but lending its power to all the machinery, or the great general who fires no guns, but organizes victories for others.

ATTRACTIONS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL.

BY REV. SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD.

I PRESUME there always will be a class of grumblers. They object, and criticise, and find fault until, by and by, people really begin to believe that there is good ground of complaint. My friend Gradgrind—lineal descendant of the celebrated party of that name—is one of these grumblers. He is perpetually asking: "What's the use? Where's the good?"

I do sincerely believe that there are folks in the world who would like to go up and wash their hands in the golden vapors of the morning clouds, and who would then return to earth and assert that morning clouds were all mist and nonsense. What they can not immediately perceive as instantly full of result is something which they will not touch at any price. And I am so afraid that Mr. Gradgrind's stringent method prevail's in a great many Sunday-schools that I write these few lines to say so.

Occasionally he tells me: "I don't see the use of my boy going to Sunday-school. He ought to be taught at home. These Sunday-schools are breaking up all our home training." Well, half of this objection is true and half of it isn't true, and a partial truth is the meanest kind of a thing; like a half-moon, which is to my eyes the meanest kind of a moon. I am very sure that I can get twenty good men and women out of twenty-one who will teach better and do more effective service in Sunday-school classes that at home. You see the facilities are not so encouraging. For in the

first place, there are not many families who sing—and music is one of the best features of our Sunday work. And then, there isn't the opportunity of contact with different minds of the same age—for that must be a very remarkable family where you can get a class of about the same advancement in knowledge. "But," says Mr. G., "you overlook my point. It's this individual instruction I want to secure." Quite so; but when one puts himself in a constrained attitude of instruction and the child in a constrained attitude of being instructed, how much advantage is there in it? Ought not this instruction to be taken in "at the pores" and without effort, every time parent and child are together?

I remember distinctly several books which had this influence on me—just as though they had been friends talking quietly. There was "Sanford and Merton"—that never-to-be-forgotten book of Thomas Day. And there were the "Boyhood of Great Men," and "John Railton, or Read and Think," and the whole ten volumes of Chamber's Miscellany. I recall many another similar book which a kind and thoughtful father put in my way, and which made up much of my home-life. And here is just where I take exception to the method of Mr. Gradgrind. He is so severely religious in his "home-training," and he condemns so sharply the "frivolities" of the Sunday-school that his children break loose whenever they get the chance. They realize the old perversion: "Train up a child in the way he should go—and away he goes," and that other proverb about ministers' sons and deacons' daughters.

I find that I drift naturally into a suggestive article to some of those very excellent prosaic people who are continually harping on this theme of inutility. I am ready to grant that some Sunday-schools forget the true end of all good Sunday-school effort—the salvation of the soul. But I am equally sure that when the Lord Jesus was about to make his disciples "fishers of men" he did not intend to have them slash their nets around and frighten all the fish.

Attractiveness is the thing which the home-class can not get except under extraordinary circumstances. Some Sunday-schools may even yet lack it and be conducted—as too many things in churches *are* conducted—upon older methods and more advanced ideas than children are capable of receiving. We are just about welcoming into our American life a whole generation of boys and girls, trained in the public schools to sing, to use their arms and legs, to see flowers in the windows and pictures on the walls. You will find these scholars brightening those very common homes from which often times they come in the same manner as their school rooms have been brightened. They will carry from the Sunday-school and the church the beauty or the gloom of the religion which is taught. They will either conceive the idea of the Saviour as a loving, helpful, self-sacrificing God-man, tender and kind to children, wise and sympathetic with the young—or he will be forever the sufferer in Gethsemane, the expiator on Calvary. And I do honestly think that to take one or two closing features of the life of our Lord, unmodified and unexplained by the fair colors of the rest of his life, is to give a false picture of the Christ. We need a Christ for every day living fully as much as we need a Saviour from sin and death.

Now, not to preach about this thing, I maintain that this is the idea around which our Sunday-schools are more and more crystalizing. But even yet we do not carry it so far as we could. How few of our school-rooms are as attractive as are the middle-class homes in our cities and towns? There is an artificial glare about the decorations when they come. The formality and rigidity of certain systems of school-conduct are equally apparent. The real use and benefit are hidden beneath a certain repulsive exterior.

Mr. Gradgrind winks at me and

smiles. I have been too fanciful, too enthusiastic. He fetches me back to earth. He says, "Yes, but where's the money to come from?"

I do not know that we need much money. I think I would not find great difficulty in getting this along at a slight cost. After the essentials are secured—the cabinet organ, the seats, the carpet, the maps—I don't fancy that the little aromatic breaths of a loftier atmosphere are hard to obtain.

I was riding with friends in Milwaukee the other day. We came to a house pearl-tinted and with the cornice and edgings shaded off into a delicate gray. "How pretty that house is!" exclaimed a lady of the party. "Yes," said her shrewd husband, "you like it because it has those two crimson chairs on the porch and those geraniums and leaf-plants in the garden-bed." And, as a matter of fact, those were the precise points of effectiveness in the picture, and without them it would have been a dull and monotonous house indeed.

So there are these same circumstances to be noted in the Sunday-school room—inexpensive circumstances, requiring only a fine sense of fitness and need to produce their presence. The heaven is certainly a lovely blue, but God shows stars upon it, and he gives to the stars different colors. And where will you find religion springing up more naturally in the heart of man than in those eastern nations over whom the splendid and cloudless sky is but the setting for these excellent spheres of light? Therefore I must still assert that if we are compelled to worship God indoors we must make his house as much in harmony with nature in her best moods as we possibly can.

And now as to pictures. If we are to have purely religious ones and those only, it would be well that they should be of the very highest class. Paul Delaroche is preferable to a poor and cheap engraving, for in his work there is poetry—and while it may not awaken much response all at once, the presence of a thing of beauty will make a joy forever. But Paul Delaroche and other such fine pictures cost money—and I was not to use money to any large extent if I remember. I say then, that I know that in many schools—if not in all—there are scholars who would *lend* really good and artistic engravings or chromos of natural scenery to the school walls. The other sort degrades taste, and must not be secured. The first thing is to get them there and do away to a great extent with mere mottoes or old-fashioned and hideous prints. There are even schools which have a prejudice against any thing except bare walls—so far has our anti-Romanism led us.

Such pictures are fortunately growing more and more common in all our houses. They are bright in topic or color, or both. They can be hung by a light expenditure of bright cord, and they will make a glory in a darkened room. And so long as we are contending against the inartistic jumbling of colors in stained-glass windows their aid is by no means despicable.

Then there are a great many boys now-a-days who are learning for pleasure the art of printing. There are quite a number of small printing-presses, with fonts of type and all things to match, which are furnished at low figures and are substantial and capable of really first-class work. Hence I do believe that a small printing establishment in connection with a Sunday-school and under the right kind of care and handling is greatly to be desired. There are always offices near by from which to get ink, or if need be, borrow type for extra cards or circulars. And in a fair-sized school the printing-bills for a year would more than cover all outlay.

Among our girls are those who have been or are being carefully trained as piano-forte players. These girls ought to be so instructed that they shall realize the privileges they possess of helping and encouraging others. And if there is a piano in the school—and there frequently is or *can* be—an interlude of

solemn but not lugubrious music—the music of the master-composers—is a most cheering and pleasant feature.

Let us avoid, my dear Mr. Gradgrind, the danger of making young people frivolous by giving them joy instead of inducing that levity which is the reaction against severe and unnatural ways. Let us remind ourselves all the time that we can not expect boys and girls to think and feel as we think and feel, but must train and help them and must make the Sunday-school attractive—without sacrificing force and earnestness to attraction. Mere thin, superficial prettinesses let us abundantly despise—but deep, genuine gladness let us cherish and increase.

Paul says: "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child," and these children are not yet men and women. We want them to grow up into the same happy, reverent life in the church that they have learned to know first in the Christian home of a real Sunday-school.

THROUGH THE SCHOLAR'S GLASSES.

BY JAMES H. KELLOGG.

EVER since the great scheme of lessons sprang into existence the note of preparation has sounded all along the lines of the Sunday-school army. It has formed a staple of essays and discussions in our conventions, and of elaborate articles in current journalism. The fraternity of Sunday-school teachers have realized the truth that to prepare well is a long step taken toward successful teaching.

In earlier days men have found themselves, often, so floundering in the sea of commentaries that among the "multitude of counselors" there has been abundant fogginess. The teachers in the Sunday-schools of to-day are not without danger of bewilderment, at least in the mass of "helps" with which they are inundated. It is a question whether some teachers have not been "helped" to habits of indolence by the variety and quantity of matter prepared for their use, or, like the fly in the honey-pot, have only found themselves besmeared and sticking in the mass of sweetness from which they would have added to their stores. We are not without danger of continuing in existence a large class of merely routine teachers who find a cursory review of the elaborate preparation which has been made for them quite sufficient for their preparatory purposes. The whole subject of lesson preparation is, of course, attended with difficulties, and must improve in its minutiæ with the progress of time and experience. Condensation, provocation of thought, suggestion, the simple outlining of thought will be, more than ever, objective points for such as have in charge the material for the various publications.

Everything else being equal, that lesson will be best presented and enforced which is wrought out, patiently and thoroughly, of the teacher's own mind and heart. But any amount of general preparation will not always give him the "key to the situation,"—the best way of approach to the pupil's heart. It would be best for any teacher could he know the spiritual conditions as well as the mental habits and abilities of the pupil. It would be a consummate advantage did we know all that passes in the mind and influences the heart of him to whom we would impart instruction. And in this great knowledge must the Lord Jesus, the Divine Teacher, ever retain his sublime supremacy. He it was who could tell the woman of Samaria, and can repeat to every human soul all things that ever they have done. The human teacher must be satisfied with a far less intimate knowledge of the learner who sits by his side, but a

personal knowledge of some sort and degree he needs, most absolutely, if he is thoroughly to impress his pupil with divine truth. He must, measurably at least, view truth from the stand-point of the learner, look at it through the pupil's glasses, through which, indeed, it is often seen obscurely and at a distance. He must find out how much the pupil needs to know, and, discovering the vacuum, direct his energies to the filling of it, rather than to the doing of some other, and perhaps not needed, thing. But here is a great difficulty with many teachers. We are frequently told to go back, in our memories to early childhood, and trace experiences and feelings, fears and doubts, and all the varied workings of the mind of childhood and of youth, and apply these reminiscences in our work. But the difficulty is to do this with any thoroughness, and when points are remembered, to give them anything like the freshness of application which would pertain to a difficulty or a thought newly communicated by the pupil himself. And a mere ordinary, or even intimate, acquaintance and friendship may not always reveal to the teacher his pupil's greatest spiritual struggles and necessities, though it will go very far toward such knowledge. I have thought if the pupil himself could have a part in directing the line of the teacher's preparation of the Bible lesson it would be well. Suppose a certain time in advance of each lesson, the pupil, by arrangement, should present to the teacher his most important thoughts upon it, including difficulties requiring answer, stating them briefly either orally or in writing, as might be the best, considering the age of the scholar. Or, to commence with, some representative pupil could be chosen to perform this service, and in time the service might go on in rotation, each, of course, giving personal views and feelings. It need not necessarily be known to the class at large from whence the suggestions might proceed, and the teacher need not, of course, use them in any way that would be repugnant or distasteful. Would not such a course "break the ice" of reserve and formality existing in many a class to-day, while it would help to systematize and improve the work of many sympathetic teachers who, already, have much knowledge of the inner life of their classes? Further, could not this idea, with care and prudence, be made a benefit to those who do not regularly teach, perhaps, but are in the specific work of lesson preparation for our publications? Could they not call in the assistance of children and youth, often, in this way of suggestion and helpfulness? Nay, could they do better than to secure regular assistance from these sources? "To impart as knowledge before unknown, and to exhibit impressively," are offices of the teacher, recognized and important. In whatever way, then, the teacher can most thoroughly possess himself of the actual condition of the pupil he can at first most successfully work. It is possible that in the many able preparations of the lessons, in our great series, there has not been enough studying of the average condition of the primary pupils, the intermediate, and of all the grades of learners. And hence, it is not unlikely that the points made are often of more general application to all ages of the world than to our own age and our own particular community. It is true that the nature of man is everywhere evil, and has been for all generations, but modes of application and ways of working, in spiritual things, have taxed the ingenuity of good men, as well as devils, for variety, in all the ages.

The standpoint of the child pupil, especially, is notably free from the prejudices which age and learning and experience must inevitably bring. Blinded by natural evil, there is yet a longing want for the pure and simple truth the divine word alone can supply. To teach this clearly, effectively, surely, there must be the clearest, truest, simplest apprehension of the thought of God enfolded by the sacred text. There is a pupil's side

in every well made lesson preparation of the teacher which suggests natural difficulties, hard points, not in the theologies or in the brains of commentators perhaps, but in the average mind, undisciplined, and in the average heart, not yet developed. The wise teacher will seek to adapt himself to the learner's honest doubts, his mental struggles, and the ever recurring longings of his thirsting spirit. Preparation, with him, will mean not accumulations of dry facts alone, or masses of speculation, or even the weighty words of godly men, but the purest understanding of the vital truth, the deepest sympathy with the pupil's need, based upon the knowledge of his want, and glowing words of kindliest counsel treasured in a warm and loving heart.

HOW MR. MOODY BECAME A PREACHER.

BY J. B. T. MARSH.

THERE is no other man living whose name is so often seen in the papers, so often repeated in public speech and private conversation, so gratefully remembered in so many prayers to heaven, as that of Mr. Moody. It is something new when there is nowhere in the world any ruler or any rascal who attracts so much attention as an unlettered lay preacher. In the light of his later career any facts of his earlier history become of interest.

Mr. Moody is thirty-eight years old, a native of Northfield, Mass., a beautiful town in the Connecticut River Valley, where his good mother still resides. His father was a farmer, who died in middle age, leaving his widow little property and the care of nine young children. Dwight Lyman — there is a suggestive New England flavor about the name — was early thrown on his own resources. His schooling was limited to a few terms, and those fuller of frolic than study, they say, at the district school. At the age of seventeen he found employment in the boot and shoe house of an uncle in Boston. In energy and self-reliance he was a young steam engine. One condition on which the uncle gave the headstrong country boy a situation was that he should regularly attend the services and Sunday-school of the Mount Vernon Congregational church, of which Dr. Kirk was pastor. There he fell under the influence of a wise and faithful Sunday-school teacher. The heart of Edward Kimball must thrill with thankful joy as he remembers the talk in the shoe store that was blessed to the conversion of a boy whose rough shell hid so rich a kernel! "I can feel the touch of that man's hand on my shoulder yet," says Moody, as he tells the story to encourage teachers in faithful effort to lead their scholars to Christ. Many years after he met the unconverted son of that old teacher. "How old are you?" he asked. "Seventeen," was the answer. "Just my age when your father led me to Christ." And a talk and a prayer followed, from which the young man dates the beginning of his Christian life.

Applying for admission to the church after his conversion, the committee found their doctrinal catechism of Moody so unsatisfactory that they kept him waiting six months before they could make up their minds to receive him to membership. It is doubtful whether he knew much more about the doctrines then than at first. But he was ready in the doings. He became a zealous and successful recruiting officer for the Sunday-school. He lifted up his voice in the prayer-meeting; to the great annoyance sometimes, so tradition says, of the brethren who did not enjoy his blunt way of laying Scripture along

side the social exclusiveness and the business methods that he thought were not exactly Christian.

It was not long before he was attracted to the thriving young city of Chicago. Finding a situation in one of its largest boot and shoe houses, he soon became one of the most successful salesmen in the establishment. It was his pride to foot up the largest sales of the day. He posted himself at the store door and pounced on customers as soon as they entered. If those who came of their own accord did not keep him busy, he scoured the streets and hotels to hunt up others. He joined Plymouth Church and packed his Sundays as full of labor as his week-days. He rented four pews, which he filled from Sunday to Sunday with young men picked up in the boarding-houses or on the streets. He plunged into Sunday-school work, gathering new scholars, now for this school and now for that — denominational lines made no difference to him. It was while a member of a Congregational church, and a teacher in a Methodist Sunday-school, that he formed the acquaintance of Mr. John V. Farwell, the rich merchant. The fellowship of spirit and work thus begun has been with both men one of the most influential forces of their lives. It was Mr. Farwell's intimate personal acquaintance with Mr. Moody and his work that prompted the gift of thirty thousand dollars, which gave Farwell Hall its name. But the world has never known, it is doubtful whether Mr. Farwell himself knows how many thousands more he has invested in his friend's work. A little incident will illustrate the characteristics of the two men and their friendship. When Moody had decided to come to Great Britain, two years ago, he informed his friends of his purpose, and among those who called to bid him good-bye, just before he was to leave, was Mr. Farwell. He supposed that the English friends, on whose invitation Moody was going, had supplied him with funds. But thinking he would find good use for all he had, he brought along a check for five hundred dollars. It was only the other day that Mr. Farwell happened to hear, in a round-about way from a friend he had in London, that it was the proceeds of that check that paid Moody's passage. He had decided to go, though he had not a dollar in his pocket to go with, believing that the Lord called him, and that the Lord would send the money before it was time to start. To a man coming with such faith it was a matter of no discouragement that his first prayer-meeting in England was attended by but four persons; and quite a matter of course that the prayer-meeting of four in York should be followed by prayer-meetings of four thousand in London.

It was while recruiting for the regular church Sunday-schools that Moody was seized with the idea of starting a school where the wild young Arabs of the street, who could not be coaxed into the well-dressed and well-behaved schools with which he had so far been associated, might be curbed and tamed with Gospel influences. He selected as his field "The Sands," a locality on the north side which rivaled, in squalor and crime, the Five Points of New York. Finding an empty room that had been used as a saloon, he hired it, and started out to drum up a school. The gamins at first fought shy of him; but he filled his pockets with maple sugar, and with this new ammunition soon conquered an acquaintance. By day he sold boots and shoes, by night he scouted through the alleys, distributing maple sugar. It was a queer school at first; but it was a live one. Soon it outgrew the old saloon, and moved into a larger room over the North Market. Here Mr. Farwell was pressed into service as its superintendent; but Moody was its field agent. Within a year it reached an average attendance of six hundred and fifty, and soon swelled to a thousand. It became the best known and most visited Sunday-school in the west. A vast amount of work was put into it. Moody and the helpers he had drawn about him were

constantly searching the alleys and climbing the stairways of The Sands, helping the poor, praying with the sick, and coaxing old and young to the school. Great was the wrath of the Romanist families over his persistent efforts to get their children into his school. Many were the threats against his life; many the times that he had to take to his legs for self-protection; but he always came around again, and always carried his point at last. On one occasion three furious men cornered him in a room, closed the door, and notified him that his time had come. He had never found himself in quite so tight a pinch before, but he was equal to the emergency. "Look here, give a fellow a chance to say his prayers first, won't you?" They could not well refuse that last request, and down Moody dropped on his knees, and prayed *for them* with such fervor that, one by one, they stole out of the room, leaving him to lead off to Sunday-school the children he came for.

Moody believes that a man is never so poverty-stricken nor so sick that he needs anything else so much as he needs religion. But along with the Gospel he was always carrying relief for physical necessities, using his own money when he had any, and following it up with such funds as friends familiar with his labors from time to time gave to him. By and by this work so grew on his hands and heart that he felt called to give up business and devote his entire time to it. He put a little money that he had not given away into a pony to carry him about his work, and put himself into the hands of the Lord. At first the Lord did not pay him a very large salary. For a while he slept at night on the benches in the Young Men's Christian Association rooms, because he had no money with which to pay for lodgings elsewhere; slept there with money in his pockets which friends that did not know his circumstances had given him to use in his work, but which he would not touch for his personal expenses. In these days, with so many friends who would be glad to give him more, he declines to take any money that he does not need for immediate use. Moody and his pony were a familiar sight in Chicago streets in those days, and no man in the city was better known. He would start out of a Sunday morning on a recruiting expedition, and return to his school-room with the pony loaded down with young urchins, the last enlistments hanging on to the tail as they marched behind. Into this busy life came the upheaving of the war. Moody soon found work to do among the Confederate prisoners at Camp Douglas, and to no one else so much as to him was due the great revival which made so many hundreds of those prisoners of war free men in Christ Jesus. He was often at the front in the service of the Christian commission, working day and night with the sick and wounded; the brusque man surprising his friends with his womanly knack and tenderness—dressing wounds and dispensing medicines with his hands from cot to cot, while his tongue talked of Christ and his salvation. His preaching is full of telling illustrations drawn from his reminiscences of those never-to-be-forgotten days.

After the war he returned to his old life in Chicago. As its city missionary, and finally as its president, he did a wonderful work for the Young Men's Christian Association, of which there is no place here to speak, but of which Farwell Hall, a second time rebuilt, with its well-organized bureaus of Christian work and its vigorous noon prayer-meeting, is a fitting monument. But his school was his first love. Conversions were constantly occurring in it. At first he advised converts to unite with those churches to which their old preferences would lead them. But many of them came out of the depths in which every sort of church tie had been lost hold of. They did not feel at home in church; they *were* at home with Moody. So an independent church grew out of the school, and Moody became its unordained pastor. Never was

there another church like it. It was made up almost wholly of men, women, and children converted in the school. But it was a hive of Bible readers, tract distributors, lay preachers, and missionary visitors. In Moody's theory of the Christian life, the next thing for a man to do after he has turned to the Lord is to go to work for him. He preached only the cardinal doctrines believed by all intelligent orthodox Christians—he finds little use for any other in his preaching now. The doctrine that men are lost in sin, and that Christ alone can save them, was the burden of his preaching; and most remarkable were the results.

Year by year he became more and more in demand for Sunday-school and Christian conventions. Called to all parts of the country, he was never absent from Chicago and his school over Sunday when he could possibly avoid it. It will be a joyful day to it and him when he shall stand before it again, after this memorable two years' absence in Great Britain.—*Christian at Work.*

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XXXVI.—SEPT. 5, 1875.—THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

SCRIPTURE.—John 9 : 1-11. Commit 1-7; Primary Verse, 5.

1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.
2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?
3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest to him.
4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
5 As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.
6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,
7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.
8 The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?
9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.
10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?
11 He answered and said, a man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."—Ps. 119: 18.

TOPIC.—SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is. 29 : 1-24.....Spiritual Blindness to be Cured.
T. Is. 42 : 1-16.....Blind Eyes to be Opened.
W. Mark 8 : 22-26.....The Blind Man of Bethsaida.
Th. Matt. 9 : 27-31.....The two Blind Men of Capernaum.
F. Matt. 20 : 29-34.....The two Blind Men of Jericho.
S. Matt. 11 : 1- 6....."The Blind Receive their Sight."
S. 2 Cor. 4 : 1-18.....The Light in the Heart.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE LIGHT NEEDED.—1-4. In the fifth verse Christ calls himself "the light of the world." How many reasons can you give why he should be so called? Who, in the first verse, needed this Light? Who in the second? Who does *not* need it? What did the blind man need this Light for? The disciples for what? We, for what? What did the disciples think it was that caused the man to be blind? 2. Does sin ever cause disease? Did it in this case? 3. Why was it permitted that the man should be blind? What reason did Jesus give for then giving him sight? 4. What does "day" and "night" mean in that verse? What lesson does it teach? Was there anything to make it dangerous for Jesus to stop and heal him? Read the last verse of the last chapter, and the first verse

of this, and see. What do you think that shows about the character of Jesus?

THE LIGHT GIVEN.—6, 7. To whom is it given? 5. To whom was it then specially given? 7, 8. How? Why do you suppose he anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay and sent him to the pool of Siloam to wash? What is the meaning of "Siloam"? What did Christ do to the blind man of Bethsaida? Mark 8: 22–26. What to the deaf man of the Sea of Galilee? Mark 7: 32–35. What to the two blind men of Capernaum and of Jericho? Matt. 9: 27–31; 20: 29–34.

THE LIGHT MANIFEST.—8–11. Who first noticed that the blind man could see? 8. Were they all sure of it? 9. What do you think made them doubt? What way did they take to find out? 10. What is his answer? 11. What does the former blind man say of Christ? 17. What next? 25. What last? 33. Did he ever learn who Jesus really was? 35–38. What did his parents think of the miracle? 19–23. What effect did it have on the Jews? 18, 28, 29, 34. To whom, then, was the Light manifest, and to whom was it hidden? Is Christ *your* Light?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

PRELIMINARY.—The incidents that cluster around the healing of this blind man are most graphically, and even dramatically narrated. The vividness with which they are set forth stamp them as genuine. No one could have manufactured such a story, set with so many small details, each so appropriate in its place, and so fitting to the different persons portrayed. The character of the blind man is itself a study. Shut off from birth from much intercourse with men, having to do with them only as he made the usual beggar's plea for alms; ignorant, therefore, and uncultivated, yet how ready, apt, and even wittily ironical are his replies to his learned inquisitors. How completely and incontrovertibly he at last confutes them and leaves them no other argument but that of brute force. Mark the several attitudes of the "neighbors," the parents, and the Jews, and then we can see that the apostle was describing no fanciful picture, but an actual reality.

It is probable that the event took place on the same day of the occurrences related in the last chapter. The only thing which militates against such a supposition is the seeming unlikelihood of his stopping to heal a blind man near the temple, just as he was escaping from the Jews. 8: 59. But this improbability is met by the intimate connection of the first verse of the ninth with the last verse of the eighth chapter, and by the corroborative fact that in both cases it was the Sabbath day. 14. That was the last day of the feast with the events of which the seventh and eighth chapters are concerned. And to do a good deed in the face of personal danger was not unlike, but most wholly like our Lord.

The position of the pool of Siloam has already been indicated in the discussion relative to the pool of Bethesda. It is variously called Siloah, Shiloah, and Siloam. Neh. 3: 15; Is. 8: 6. Its meaning, as explained in verse 7, is *Sent*. It is near the southern extremity of the temple mount, near what is supposed to be Mount Ophel, and is an oblong tank, partly hewn out of the rock and partly composed of masonry, measuring about fifty-three feet in length, eighteen in width, and nineteen feet in depth. A flight of stone steps leads down to the bottom. The water is of the same brackish taste and quality as the Fountain of the Virgin, with which it is connected.

THE LIGHT NEEDED.—1–4. Of course the most pitiable figure, the one that pleaded most for aid, was the one who had always been blind. Naturally he was the central one of that group. *Blind from his birth.* No mere inflammation of the eyes, to be helped by an ointment of clay and spittle—no sudden paralysis of the optic nerve, to be cured by a gentle, mesmeric touch. Jesus saw him—*as he passed by.* Wonderful is it that he should see him and that he should stop, when not far distant was the angry mob that sought his life? Wonderful it may be to others, but not to those who themselves have experienced the compassion of Christ, and who have

seen him slain in their stead. His stopping to do this miracle under the circumstances was extraordinary, it is true, but oh how natural! To his wondering disciples, whose theological difficulty is answered by speech and miracle, he explains why even in such danger he performs the cure: "*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.*" This reference to life as "day" and death as "night" was rendered the more impressive, probably, by the fact that it was now near the close of the day. To us it is still more impressive that it was uttered toward the close of *his* day. The "night" indeed was not far off when his earthly ministry should cease, for, as nearly as can be reckoned, it was only six months to his crucifixion. Ever working — what an example he left us! Working, though wearied, at the well of Samaria — working here, though in the midst of danger. Truly could he say: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to *finish* his work."

But the disciples needed light in their way as much as the blind man did in his. They are puzzled as to the cause of this blindness. Their theory is that it is the result of sin. But whose sin — this man's or his parents'? One would think that concerning *his* innocence in bringing it about there could have been no doubt. It is suggested in regard to this that the Jews believed that there could be anti-natal sin, for proof of which they cited the struggle before birth between Jacob and Esau; that they believed in the transmigration of souls, and, therefore, that one was punished for the sins done in the anterior life; and that sometimes God chastised in anticipation for the sins that he foreknew one would commit. To us the other explanation seems the more reasonable — that the disciples rejected the idea that it could have been for the sin of the man; as if they had said: "Has this man sinned, or, since that is inconceivable, has his parents sinned that he should be born blind?" Sin, indeed, is the author of all our afflictions. Milton sings the truth in saying:

> Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden, etc.

Sickness, too, was often threatened as a special punishment for sin. Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:22. See also Job 4:7; 8:6. And there is no doubt that some maladies are now and ever have been the direct result of sinful practices. So, too, with hereditary diseases. Some children, no doubt, have to suffer for the ignorance or the wickedly persistent indulgence of their parents — of which the transmitted appetite for liquor is an illustration in point. But this sickness was not of that kind. Christ does not say that either the man or his parents were free from sin, but that their sin did not cause this blindness. And in this he taught them that physical affliction was not always a "judgment" upon people as some even in our times are disposed to think. This blindness was "that the works of God should be made manifest in him." It was not *caused* for that purpose, but *used* for it. See, in illustration: John 11:4; Rom. 5:20; 9:17; 11:25, 32, 33.

THE LIGHT GIVEN. — 5-7. *To the world.* It is noticeable that while performing this miracle he speaks of his act as symbolic only. As he gives the light of day to this blind man, so does he give light to the world. *I am the light of the world* is a comparison of himself to the sun — thus making himself the moral sun of the universe. In prophecy (Is. 49:6) he was announced as a coming "light," and when he was come, devout Simeon took him in his arms as "the light to lighten the Gentiles." Luke 2:32. In prophecy and in its realization he was to shine for all the world — not for Judea alone. For all the world, as the sun itself does, though the blind can not, and the wilfully blind will not, see its shining. Here the special fitness of the term "light" as applied to Christ was:

1.—The blind man was by him made to see. 2.—The works of God were made "manifest" as they could be only in the light.

To the man.—The process is given in verses 6, 7. There are four recorded cases of Christ's giving sight to the blind—more cures of blindness than of any other one infirmity. The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida has the most interest just now for us, because of the similar method employed. There Christ put spittle on his eyes, and after laying his hands on them asked him if he saw aught. He replied: "I see men as trees, walking." Again he put his hands on his eyes and then he "saw every man clearly." Mark 8:23–25. The cure of the deaf and dumb man, narrated in Mark 7:32–35, also has some points of similarity. In his case Christ put his fingers in his ears and spit and touched his tongue. In the two other instances of restoration from blindness he merely touched their eyes. There is no question but in all these instances that what was done was done as a help to faith, and the outward ceremonies were shortened or lengthened according as the necessities demanded. The clay was made and applied to the eyes of the blind man that he might feel that something external was being done for him. He was told to go and wash in order that by the time he arrived at the pool his faith may have grown to equal the occasion. That he had some measure of faith to begin with is shown from the fact that when he was told to go to the pool he immediately went. He was no Naaman either in pride or incredulity.

To John it appears of some moment that he was directed to go to a pool whose signification is *Sent*. He leaves it to his readers, however, to infer what importance he attaches to that fact. But it is quite easy to see what was in his mind. Christ was one that was "sent." John 3:17, 34; 5:37, 38; 7:29; 8:42. So often does he thus refer to himself that to his titles might well be added that of "The Sent." In Zech. 13:1 the prophet speaks of him as "a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." And now, in all probability, we have the full similitude that was in John's mind. Christ himself was the real pool Siloam. It was in that "fountain opened for uncleanness" that the blind man was really made whole, and not in the waters in which he bathed his eyes.

THE LIGHT MANIFEST.—*To the man.* The light of day he has seen as he came from the pool. But the greater Light—will he behold that also? In the one case sight was instantaneous. In this, mark its gradual development. 1st.—In his testimony to his neighbors (9–11) he states all the facts simply, but puts no interpretation on them. 2d.—When brought before "the Pharisees," which probably means the Sanhedrim, when called upon (17) he expresses his estimate of the one by whom he was healed—"he is a prophet." He has been a quiet spectator of the wrangle that has been going on about his healer until he is asked to speak, and then his words drop among the disputants with the weight of a cannon ball. 3d.—When the Pharisees return, discomfited, from the parents again to him (24, 25), and ask him to confess that it is all a deception, instead of bending before the persistent fury of the rulers, he shows the solidity of a rock. He declines to enter into the discussion as to whether "this man is a sinner," for in a discussion concerning what would be a devout observance of the Sabbath day, he would have stood a poor chance. He "knows" only one thing: "whereas I was blind, now I see." On that ground he is impregnable. Skeptics may confuse a Christian with arguments on the origin of evil, or lead him into inextricable mazes on the origin of things, but so long as he keeps within the bounds of his own experience he is unassailable—"one thing I KNOW that whereas I was BLIND, now I SEE." 4th.—His persecutors, ignoring the marvelous fact, want to get at those trivial things upon which they can frame a charge of "working" on the Sabbath.

When they again pressed this point (26–33), he turns upon them with the ironical retort: "*Wherefore would ye hear it again? Will ye also be his disciples?* Exasperated already by his steady testimony, this provokes them beyond endurance, and they begin to revile him. But he, unfearing, turns upon them again and declares that it is a marvelous thing that they know not whence he is. *Now we know.* Their law told them as much. Ps. 66: 18; Prov. 28: 9. He was learned enough already to cope with them in argument, and what he says is unanswerable except by blows. *They cast him out*—excommunicated him. 5th.—Up to this time he had seen the Light, but seen it dimly. But when Jesus heard of the ban pronounced upon him he sought him out (35–38), and, then, for the first, he saw Christ not as "a prophet" but as the Son of God. At last, indeed, his eyes were opened and he saw clearly.

To the Neighbors.—8–11. They were first to make enquiry about the cure. That was so wonderful, and the expression of the man's face was so changed by the addition of sight, that they could hardly believe it was he. Not till he himself affirms that it is so do they feel certain of it. Then they take him before the Pharisees, apparently that they may know what to think of Him who performed the cure. They, too, see the Light, but dare not walk in it without authority, and place it in eclipse by interposing the Sanhedrim between themselves and it.

To the Parents.—18–23. To them it is most plainly manifest, for they know the life-long affliction of their son, and that no other than divine hands could draw away the dark curtain that lay before his vision. Too honest to deny, they are yet too afraid to affirm. They fear the ban of excommunication which, already threatened, was unhesitatingly met by their son. The son soon had a rich reward for openly confessing Christ—but what reward had they?

THE LIGHT HID.—It was hid to the Pharisees who would not see it. It is amazing to see what pains they took that they might not behold Christ as the light of the world. They declared against him because he "made clay" on the Sabbath day. When pressed by the question, "can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" then they deny the miracle. As, however, this is established both by the testimony of the parents and the man himself, finally, in impotent rage, they cast the one that once was blind out of the synagogue. Those who are determined not to see will not see. The most trivial things are often pitched upon as objections to the divinity of Christ, while the main things that prove it are utterly disregarded. The main question is: "*Does he cure?*" If he makes "new creatures" out of men, we can let all minor questions take care of themselves. We need not enquire into the *how* if we are satisfied of the *fact*.

Short-Range Topics.

1.—The compassion of Christ—how quickly it was touched! For the *sick*. Matt. 14: 14; Mark 1: 41. For the bereaved. Luke 7: 13; John 11: 33–35. For sinners. Matt. 11: 28–30; 9: 36; Luke 19: 41.

2.—How diligently should we work. Our work may not be great, but diligence will do much to make it so. And the night cometh—soon cometh—when no man can work. Diligent in seeking him, Heb. 11: 6; in keeping the heart, Prov. 4: 23; in attaining Christian graces, 2 Pet. 1: 5; in labors of love, Heb. 6: 10–12; in pressing onward, Phil. 3: 13, 14; in finishing our work, Eccl. 9: 10.

3.—The office of afflictions is to glorify God. If they come as the result of sin, in repentance. If as a test, in patient submission. John 15: 2; Rom. 5: 3; 2 Cor. 12: 7; Heb. 12: 10, 11; Jas. 1: 3, 4; 1 Pet. 1: 7; Rev. 2: 10.

4.—Christ is the "light of the world," and we have been called "out of darkness into this marvelous light." Therefore should it be seen that we are children of the day and not of the night. John 12: 46; Eph. 5: 8; 1 Thess. 5: 5; 1 Pet. 2: 9.

5.—The Light is hidden or the Light is revealed, according to the temper of men. If they really desire to behold it, none ever fail to see it manifested. If any are blind they are wilfully so. Ps. 51: 11, 12; John 3: 9; Rom. 1: 28; 1 Cor. 1: 18; 2 Cor. 4: 4; 2 Thess. 2: 10, 11.

HYMN.

Work, for the night is coming;
Work thro' the morning hours,
Work while the dew is sparkling,
Work 'mid springing flowers;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

Work, for the night is coming;
Work through the sunny noon;
Fill brightest hours with labor,
Rest comes sure and soon.
Give every flying minute
Something to keep in store;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man works no more.

BLACKBOARD.

"This is the Condemnation
THAT LIGHT IS COME
Into the world,
And men LOVED DARKNESS
Rather than Light
Because their Deeds
Were EVIL."

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Recall the events of the last lesson. It was at that time that the Jews became so angry that they took up stones to cast at Jesus. But he hid himself and went out of the temple. In going out he had to pass by a man who was blind from birth. It was dangerous for Jesus to stop, but do you think he went on and left that poor man in his blindness? No, he did not. Describe what Jesus did to him—what the man did—effect.

2.—The astonishment and perplexity of the neighbors—couldn't tell whether this was the same man or not till he told them—how they took him before the Sanhedrim that they might know what to think about Christ—the division—what the man himself said: "he is a prophet"—the parents examined—the man re-examined—his ironical question—the anger of the Jews—his argument—cast out of the synagogue—*but finds Christ.* His eyes open at last to see the Light.

3.—Christ the "light of the world"—*our* light—to make us see how bad sin is—how good God is—to make life pleasant for us; (Light is pleasant—darkness is fearful; Christ is light, and sin is darkness); to shine so that we can see the pathway to heaven. The Bible says that "ye are all children of the light" if you serve Christ. Explain how fitting the term is. Those who are "children of light" are not afraid to have anybody see what they do. But if a boy steals, etc., he wants no one to see him. He is a child of darkness.

HYMN.

Children of the heavenly King,
In the light, in the light,
As we journey, sweetly sing,
In the light of God;
Sing our Saviour's worthy praise,
In the light, in the light,
Glorious in his works and ways,
In the light of God.

BLACKBOARD.

Ye are Children
OF LIGHT.
We are not of
THE NIGHT.

LESSON XXXVII.—SEPT. 12, 1875.—THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

SCRIPTURE.—John 10:1-11. Commit 1-11; Primary Verse, 11.

1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.
9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.
10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd."—Is. 40: 11.

TOPIC.—THE SHEPHERD'S LOVE.

HOME READINGS.

M. Jer. 23: 1-6.....Woe to False Shepherds.
T. Zech. 11: 1-7.....False Shepherds Doomed.
W. Ps. 23: 1-6.....The Lord my Shepherd.
Th. Ezek. 34: 1-31.....The Good Shepherd Promised.
F. Ezek. 37: 21-28.....One Fold—One Shepherd.
S. Is. 40: 1-11.....The Lambs in his Bosom.
S. Luke 15: 1-32.....The Lost Sheep.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

FALSE SHEPHERDS.—By "shepherds" are meant ministers. What, then, is meant by "sheep"? By "sheepfold"? By the "porter"? For the last, read Acts 14: 27; 2 Cor. 2: 12 and see if you then can make it out. What are the "false shepherds" called? 1, 5, 8, 12. Why are they false shepherds? 1. Who is the "door"? 9. Why are they called "thieves and robbers"? 10.

TRUE SHEPHERDS.—By what *eight things* is the real shepherd known? 2-4. Who is it that opens the door? What does he do when the door is open? What does he lead his sheep out for? 9. How will he feed them? Jer. 3: 15. Upon what? 6: 51.

THE SHEEP.—Whose voice do they hear? 3, 4. What else do they do beside hear? 4. Whose voice do they not know? 5. Will they follow a "stranger"? What else beside not follow him? Who is Christ "the door" for? 7. What is the only way for the sheep to be really safe? 9. If we enter that door what shall we do? What are the children called? Is. 40: 11.

THE HIRELING.—Whom do you think the hireling is? Those who preach for pay and not for love of souls. What does he do when the "wolf" cometh? What is meant by the wolf?

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.—Who is he? 11. What does he do? When and where did he do that? Was he *compelled* to give his life? 18. Who is it that Christ knows? 14. How much does he know about *you*? Matt. 10: 30; Ps. 44: 21. What does he do with the children? Is. 40: 11. Who is it that know Christ? 14; 1 John 5: 1. *Do you know him?* In what way did Christ show his love for his sheep? 15; Luke 15: 1-6.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Christ the Door of the Sheepfold.

PRELIMINARY.—This is a part of the discourse whose beginning is given in the ninth chapter. The occasion of it was the casting out of the former blind man from the synagogue. Its object was to show that those who had thus cruelly acted were not true shepherds of the flock. True shepherds were ready to lay down their lives for their sheep—they were bent only on destroying them.

The lesson is not one continuous parable, but is made up of two. The first one is comprised within the first ten verses; the second in the 11th to 18th. By some the latter again is divided into two, the first one ending with the 15th verse—a division that does not seem a very plain one. In the first parable Christ is represented as *the Door;* ministers are spoken of as *shepherds;* the followers of Christ are termed *sheep*, and the church is called a *sheepfold.* While it will not do in the application of a parable to find a simile in every part of it, yet from the office work of the Holy Spirit, "the porter" of the third verse would seem to refer to that person of the Trinity. See especially Acts 14: 27: 1 Cor. 16: 9; 2 Cor. 2: 12; Col. 4: 3. In the second parable Christ is the *Good Shepherd.* In the first the antithesis is between the true pastors and the false instructors; in the second between himself as the true shepherd and the mere hireling.

The modern Syrian sheepfold most admirably illustrates the lesson, and

probably is just such an enclosure as the one to which Jesus referred. It is a low, flat building into which on a cold night the sheep are driven. Connected with it is a yard, surrounded by a wall of stones, at the base of which thorns are planted, and on the top of which thorns are placed, so as to prevent the incursions of either thieves or wolves. These folds are referred to in Num. 32: 24, 36; 1 Sam. 24: 3; 2 Chr. 32: 28.

FALSE SHEPHERDS.—They are known in two ways. 1.—They do not enter by the door, but climb up some other way. 1. 2.—The sheep will not follow, but flee from them. 5. Two good tests whether a man preaches truth or not: 1st.—Does he preach it as it is in Christ Jesus? 2d.—Do the sheep—the real, faithful followers of Christ—love to listen to him? They do not enter by the door. They make nothing out of Christ. They preach philosophy, or science, or morality—theories about origin by protoplasm, natural selection, and molecular forces. *They teach nothing that saves a man from his sins*—nothing that would break the power of one single evil habit, or that would lead one to desire to break it. They are called in our lesson *thieves, robbers, strangers, hirelings, wolves. Thieves* because they rob the flock; *robbers* because they destroy those whom they steal; *strangers* because they are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"; *hirelings* because they are looking out after their own interest, and not of those they pretend to shepherd; *wolves* because they often become the open, recognized enemies of the fold.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers. 8. "*Instead of me*," rather. All the pseudo-Christs, the false teachers usurping spiritual authority, and laying claim to rule over the conscience—that "*climbeth up some other way*," not entering in at the Door. *Climbeth up*—bent on making their own way into the church as if their presence there would ensure getting into heaven; striving to force an entrance into its sacred and safe precincts; or climbing up on one theory and another into a place of fancied security; or trying to urge or steal their way in where they might come in for the asking; or pretending to the morality of the saints while inwardly they have the disposition of thieves and robbers. They are the "false prophets" which at another time Jesus bid them beware of, that "come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matt. 7: 15; see, also, Acts 20: 29, 30; 2 Pet. 2: 1. They are denounced by Jeremiah as "the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture," and by Ezekiel as "the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves," and that have not strengthened the diseased, nor healed that which was sick, nor bound up that which was broken, nor brought again that which was driven away, nor sought that which was lost, but ruled them with force and cruelty. Jer. 23: 1; Ezek. 34: 1, 4. Unmistakable signs of unfaithful shepherds. *The tests, observe, are not of pulpit oratory.* If a man strengthens the diseased, heals the sick, binds up that which is broken, brings again that which was driven away and seeks that which was lost, he is the one you want for a pastor, though in the pulpit he stutters as badly as Demosthenes when he first began to speak by the sea, and has the insignificant presence of Paul. *The sheep did not hear them.* 8. These false pastors lured away only those who were of like nature with themselves. The sheep, the real, loyal adherents to the truth, would not listen to them.

TRUE SHEPHERDS.—The true shepherd is known in eight ways: 1st.—*He enters in by the Door*—humbly. 2d.—*To him "the porter openeth"*—he is commissioned by the Holy Spirit. 3d.—*The sheep hear his voice.* It is a pretty sure sign that a man is not called of God when he can get none of God's people to hear him preach. 4th.—*He calleth his own sheep by name.* Sees them somewhere else beside in their pews—don't always shoot at long range. 5th.—"*Leadeth them out*"—to pasture; feeds them

richly with the Word of God. 6th.—*Goeth before them.* Sets his flock an example—says "Come" instead of "Go." 7th.—*The sheep follow him.* In this way God sets the final seal to his ministry. It is not enough to be ordained, to get a church, and to have an audience. The real final proof of one's call to the pulpit will be that the people "follow on to know the Lord," ever making progress in the path of righteousness. 8th.—*For they know his voice.* Have learned to know it in sickness and in joy, in distress and in prosperity, in doubt and in ecstasy.

THE SHEEP.—The real sheep—not the good and bad mixed—are here spoken of. And the real sheep are distinguished by six things: 1st.—*They hear the voice of their shepherd.* Take some pains to hear it. Are regular attendants on the services of the church. 2d.—*They follow him.* Are not merely hearers of the Word, but doers, also. 3d.—*They know his voice.* All the attempts at intimacy and fraternal relations are not on the side of the pastor. 4th.—*A stranger will they not follow.* A "stranger" here means, as has been shown, a teacher of false doctrine. They are not to be caught with a grain or two of truth in a bushel of heresies. 5th.—*But will flee from him.* Will not only not follow, but will not even listen to such a preacher. Do not want to hear him "just to hear what he says." Do not listen to the gospel at home and slip in to hear something else when abroad. Time is wasted in listening to untruths. Like Bunyan's Christian, they put their fingers in their ears and run on crying "Life! life! eternal life!" 6th.—*They know not the voice of strangers.* Blessed ignorance! Have not studied Darwin, and Hume, and Tyndall, and Mill, and Huxley, just to see if their faith could not be overthrown. Do not read every new attack on Christianity to see what force there is in it. Are not posted in all the "objections," old and new, that are urged against the Scriptures. Are not better acquainted with the foes than with the upholders of their faith—with the attacks upon the Bible rather than with the Bible itself.

THE DOOR.—Christ the Door—not for the shepherds—but for the sheep. 7. The church is not the place for ecclesiastical ambitions, but is for the convenience, comfort, and spiritual welfare of the flock. Christ the Door—and over it is written: "If ANY MAN shall enter in he shall be saved," and "To him that knocketh it shall be opened." *He shall go in and out*—expressive of his security and enjoyment. *Go in*—subordinate himself to the law. *And out*—into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Or as Paul puts it—buried with Christ in baptism; risen with him to newness of life. Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12. *And find pasture.* Just such nourishment as the soul hungers for. And where else? There is no theory of evolution, or natural selection, or any other scientific explanation of the First Cause that satisfies the hunger of the soul, that comforts in sickness or distress, or that dissipates all fear of death. "Should a wise man fill his belly with the east wind?" But Christ is the Bread of Life and upon him the soul can feed, and find that in him every want is satisfied. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good." He came that we all "might have life" and "have it more abundantly." "Of his fullness have we all received and grace for grace." The idea here put in such condensed form we already have had expanded in the lessons on the Water and Bread of Life.

Christ the Shepherd of the Sheep.

THE HIRELING.—12, 13. The one who labors merely for the dollars and cents; who has no affection for the sheep, no real shepherd feeling. Does passably well until some danger appears—some "wolf" in the shape of persecution, or when it is not popular any longer to be orthodox—then he fleeth "because he is an hireling."

All this discourse, as has been pointed out, was made to fit the circumstances of the expulsion of the blind man whom

Christ had healed. They who pretended to have the care of the conscience of the people had shown themselves to be false shepherds—*thieves*, inasmuch as they had tried to steal away all the significance of the miracle and the man's own faith in it; *robbers*, because, when they found they could not do that, they had attempted to slay him by casting him out of the synagogue; *strangers*, for they showed themselves unacquainted with the Truth when it was so plainly manifest; *hirelings*, because they acted from corrupt and selfish motives only, binding heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and laying them on men's shoulders, but not so much as touching one with their fingers (Matt. 23:4; Luke 11:46); *wolves* in their open hostility to Christ and his disciples.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.—*In the Lesson.* Just the opposite of an hireling. His pay was hatred, the thorns and the cross. Proved his right to the title of the Good Shepherd by laying down his life—*not for his doctrines*—but for his sheep. And not merely for those who were then his sheep, but for all those who were so to be. "For when we yet were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 5:8. *Know my sheep.* It is a loving knowledge. Knows them as a shepherd knows his sheep in order to minister most to their comfort and their necessities and to be loved by them. This intimate knowledge is intimate love. And what a comfort it is to every Christian that he is thoroughly *known* by Christ. Nothing is hidden from him. He will never say: "*If I had known* I would not have accepted you." *Am known of mine.* Yes, but so imperfectly. We indeed "have known surely" that thou comest out from the Father, but "now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as *I am known.*" *Other sheep I have.* Without fold, without pasturage. *Them, also, I* MUST *bring.*" "Must"—but it is the shepherd's compulsion—his longing for his sheep. *They shall hear my voice.* Divine confidence of the result—faith in infinite love as a means of bringing men back to God—a prophecy of the time when "all men shall know the Lord." *One fold and one shepherd.* Unity of belief and unity of spirit everywhere—Christ's prayer that "they all may be one" at last to be realized. *No man taketh it from me.* His sacrifice was voluntary—love-compelled only. That it was so is shown by his rebuke to Peter in the garden when he was arrested: "Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels"?

In prophecy.—It is a matter of no little interest to see how thoroughly in prophecy Christ is set forth as the Good Shepherd. In Jeremiah's denunciation of "the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture," he spoke of a coming time when the Lord would visit judgment upon them, and would bring back his scattered sheep and "set up shepherds over them which shall feed them." In that time a "righteous Branch" was to arise unto David, and he was to be called "The Lord Our Righteousness." Jer. 23:1–6. In that prediction the ministers of Christ, but not Christ himself, appear as shepherds. In the similar prophetical denunciation uttered by Ezekiel, however, Christ is spoken of as a shepherd. Ezek. 34:23. How admirably that verse fits in with Christ's own saying: "And there shall be one fold and one shepherd"! The parable of the lost sheep will be found prefigured in verses 11–16 of the same chapter. It explains, also, Christ's announcement that he came only "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In verses 17–22 may also be found foreshadowed the parable of the separation between the sheep and the goats, which is given in Matt. 25:31–46. But it was permitted to Isaiah to give the most faithful picture of this coming shepherd. He said of him: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in

his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Is. 40: 11. Could anything better describe the Saviour's character! It appears as if Isaiah must in vision have seen him as he took the little children in his arms and blessed them, and heard him say: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The denomination of Christ as a Shepherd has lost somewhat of its impressive force by the fact that we are not a pastoral people, and by the fact that the designation is not new. By constant repetition and familiarity with it, it has lost some of its power and significance. But the thought is a grand one, full of comforting meaning for men. Let the loving care that it implies, the anxiety for the lost sheep that is thus signified, be realized in the heart, and how our relations to God seem to change; what new colors does life take on, and what an inspiration does it convey! So ever it is. It rests only with us whether we will open our hearts and let the blessed truth come it. "And ye, my flock, the flock of my pasture are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."

Short-Range Topics.

1.—Let us take heed how we hear and what we hear. It is a mark of the "last days" that many "false prophets" shall arise deceiving many. Whether we are in the midst of these times or no, makes no difference. Having that which satisfieth, what need have we to seek elsewhere? Prov. 19: 27; Matt. 24: 10–12, 14; Gal. 1: 8; 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2; 2 Tim. 3: 5; 1 Thess. 5: 21; 2 Pet. 3: 3; 2 John 10; Rev. 2: 2.

2.—Christ is the "Door," or, as he is elsewhere called: "The Way, The Truth, and The Life." He is the "open door"—his rent body is our open way to heaven. John 14: 6; Rom. 5: 15; Eph. 1: 6; 2: 8; 3: 12; Heb. 10: 19–22; Rev. 3: 8.

3.—Often we get discouraged because of the sins that do so easily beset us. But courage, faint hearts! The Lord "*knoweth*" them that trust in him. He never would have accepted us had he not seen a possibility of attainment in us which we ourselves can not see nor imagine. We see the present faults—he sees the future perfections. And he that begun a good work in us is able to perform it to the end. Ps. 1: 6; Nah. 1: 7; Matt. 10: 30; 1 Pet. 4: 12; 1 John 5: 20.

4.—There is no religion but that of Jesus Christ that makes real shepherds out of its ministers. They are the only loving, helpful, self-denying pastors. A tree is to be known by its fruits. And what a fruitage of noble example in daily living, of daily self-forgetfulness, and of shepherd care for their flock have we before us in the lives of the ministers of Christ, since his own good example of self-sacrifice on the cross. Matt. 23: 11, 12; Mark 9: 35; 10: 43, 44; Luke 22: 25–27; 1 Pet. 5: 3; Luke 6: 43, 44.

5.—The time of universal brotherhood is coming, for "there shall be one fold and one shepherd." It will hasten that longed-for day to look more at those points upon which we are united, and less upon our differences. Is. 49: 6; 56: 8; Hos. 2: 23; Rom. 9: 25, 26; 12: 4–8; Eph. 2: 14; 3: 6; 4: 4; Rom. 7: 9.

HYMN.

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold,
But one had wandered far away,
In the desert so lone and cold;
Away on the mountains bleak and bare,
Away from the Shepherd's tender care.

Shepherd, hast thou not here thy ninety and nine;
Are they not enough for thee?
But the Shepherd replied, "This one of mine
Has wandered away from me;
The way may be wild and rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

BLACKBOARD.

Christ the Good Shepherd

LOVES,

CARES
SEEKS } **FOR**
DIES

HIS SHEEP.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Describe a Syrian sheepfold—the way that its walls are made secure by thorns—the shepherd—what he does for the sheep—his acquaintance with each one even by name—his defence of them against wolves and thieves and robbers—his journeys for the lost sheep. The love of the sheep for him—how they will come to him when their names are called, but will not come to a stranger—how they will follow him, but will flee from a stranger. A traveler, thinking that if he put on the shepherd's clothes they would follow him, tried it, but the sheep still would not come to him, but ran

to the real shepherd just as readily as before.

2.—The thieves and the robbers—how they get in—what they do—the hireling—difference between him and the real shepherd.

3.—Now read the lesson, explaining and getting the little ones to explain who are meant by the sheep, the thieves and robbers, the hireling, the wolf, and the Good Shepherd. Draw out their idea of a good shepherd. What would he do if a sheep were sick? If it had a leg broken? If it had fallen in a pit? If it had strayed away? If a lamb were feeble and could not walk? Then show how completely their idea of a good shepherd is met in Christ.

MEMORY VERSES.

See the gentle Shepherd standing
Where the quiet waters flow;
To the pastures green inviting,
Hungry, thirsty, let us go.

Only by the door we enter,
All who enter he will save;
Life abundantly bestowing,
Though his life the shepherd gave.

BLACKBOARD.

Christ the Good Shepherd.
HE GATHERS THE LAMBS
With his arms,
And carries them
IN HIS BOSOM.

LESSON XXXVIII.—SEPT. 19, 1875.—THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

SCRIPTURE.—John 11: 34-44. Commit 39-44; Primary Verse, 35.

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.
35 Jesus wept.
36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!
37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?
38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.
39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.
40 Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?
41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.
43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death."—Hos. 13: 14.

TOPIC.—VICTORY OVER THE GRAVE.

HOME READINGS.

M. 1 K. 17: 8-24.....The Widow's Son Restored.
T. 2 K. 4: 18-37.....The Shunammite's Son Raised.
W. Is. 26: 1-21..... "Thy Dead Men Shall Live."
Th. Matt. 9: 18-25.....The Maid Awaked from "Sleep."
F. Luke 7: 11-16....."He that was Dead Sat Up."
S. Acts 9: 36-42.....The Resurrection of Dorcas.
S. John 5: 19-29....."Passed from Death unto Life."

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

LAZARUS DEAD.—1-16. Where was Jesus when he learned that Lazarus was sick? 10: 40; 1: 28. Why had he gone there? 10: 39. Where did Lazarus live? 1. Who were his sisters? What message did they send to Jesus? 3. Was Lazarus the only one of the family he loved? 5. What reply did Jesus make? 4. Did he hurry to see Lazarus? 6. Why did he tarry? Why did the disciples try to prevent his going at all? 8. What was Jesus' answer? 9, 10. Do you understand what he meant? If you don't be sure to ask your teacher about it. What brave proposal did Thomas make? 16. How did Jesus tell the disciples that Lazarus was dead? 11-14. Is death anywhere else in the

Bible called a "sleep"? Matt. 9:24; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Cor. 15:6. Why should it be so called? Why do you think Jesus was "glad" that he was not there? 15.

LAZARUS BURIED.—17-38. How long had Lazarus been buried when Jesus arrived? 17. It had taken the messenger one day to go. Jesus had tarried two days, and one day more had been spent in coming. If Jesus had started immediately could he have got there before Lazarus died? Could he be blamed, then, for staying? Who first met Jesus? 20. What did she say to him? 21. Was she finding fault? What else did she say? 22. What does she mean by that? Read carefully verses 23-27 and see if you understand them — every word, and ask your teacher about the things that you do not. How came Mary to go and meet him, and what did *she* do? 28-32. What effect did her weeping have upon Jesus? 33-36. What is the shortest, sweetest, *best* verse in the Bible?

LAZARUS RISEN.—See if you can tell fully and particularly all the facts about this miracle as given in verses 37-45. Try it once, and then see how many things you omit. Then try it again until you get them *all*. What were the results of the miracle? 45, 46-53.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

BETHANY (*house of dates*)—"Was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off" (18)—about two miles from the city on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. It is the place where Jesus loved to retire from the conflicts in the city and in the temple, and find there peace and rest. Driven from the Temple he found a welcome in the Family. Those who shrink from the associations that hang around Gethsemane turn with a sense of rest to those of Bethany. It was there he commended Mary and gently rebuked Martha "cumbered about much serving." Luke 10: 38-42. There Mary anointed him for his burial. 12:2-8. From there he made his triumphant journey into Jerusalem. 12:1. There he resorted every night for the few days preceding his arrest and trial, and near it he ascended. It is a wretched mountain hamlet now, containing some twenty families—a mere wreck of departed beauty—but in its name the miracle of the raising of Lazarus is still perpetuated. It is called *El-Azariyeh*, or *El-Lazarieh*, which means, "the place of Lazarus."

THOMAS.—The brave exhortation of Thomas to his fellow disciples (16) merits him at least a passing historical notice. It is supposed (21:2) that he also was a Galilean. His main characteristics can be gathered from the references to him in chapters 14:5; 20:24-28. "Didymus," the other name by which he was called, is simply the Greek form of Thomas. Both mean "a twin." Of whom he was twin we have no definite knowledge. He evidently was the very soul of fidelity—strong in his love, but weak in his faith. "Doubting Thomas" he has often been called, but he seems to belong to that noble class of skeptics who scrutinize very closely all new religious facts before accepting them as true, but who once having recognized in the risen Christ, the Lord their God, are afterwards forever unwavering. Our own faith is the stronger for this "doubting Thomas." In him we have the evidence of one who put his finger into the print of the nails and his hand into the pierced side of the risen Lord. One doubting Thomas then saved many a Thomas from doubting now. He preached in Parthia, and, according to Jerome, in Persia. Later tradition represents him, also, as going to India, and there suffering martyrdom.

OBJECTIONS.—The paramount importance of this miracle has led to its being often attacked by skeptics. They affirm: 1.—That Lazarus was simply awakened out of a trance; 2.—That the whole thing is an invention made up from the parable concerning one of the same name; 3.—That it is a myth added later by the early Christians who saw that the story of such a miracle was needed to sustain the religion of Christ; 4.—That it was a deliberate deception practiced by the family of Bethany, and to which Christ lent himself. Christian people certainly owe to the skeptics their thanks for showing that all their industry has

enabled them to present no objections stronger than these.

LAZARUS DEAD.—1–16. Jesus is in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John at first was baptizing, driven there by the hostility of the Jews. 10:39, 40; 1:28. The sisters of Lazarus knowing the danger of a return, send to him the timid message: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." How delicately they show their reliance upon his love! They do not urge him to come on account of the risk. But they state the fact, leaving all to him who knoweth best whether to come or stay. *Whom thou lovest.* Admirable prayer! Not *who loveth thee.* We pray well when we appeal to God's love for us—not our love to him. *This sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God.* What a trying message to send back! For before the messenger had even started on his return Lazarus was dead. What possible interpretation could they make of it at all favorable to his resurrection? By it their faith must have been sorely tried—as it was meant to be. For the further trial of their faith he abode where he was for two days. This is not a conjecture merely, for it is said that he "loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus; when he had heard *therefore* that he was sick he abode two days." It was love to them that constrained him to stay, that their faith might be purified and strengthened. But he did not tantalize or torture them by his delay. When he did arrive Lazarus had been dead for four days. Allowing one day for the journey of the messenger, and one day for his own, these added to the two days of his stay show that Lazarus must have died even before the message sent reached the ears of Jesus. This the sisters must have known, and so looked no more toward him for help. And, then, it is more than probable that he was actively engaged in relieving cases just as important where he was. He let one family mourn for a little while in order that others might have no occasion to mourn.

As in the message to the sisters, so he speaks in the same mystical way to his disciples. First he tells them that Lazarus sleepeth, and, when led astray by a literal interpretation of his words, he is more explicit, and informs them that he is dead. To men, Lazarus, whom no call of theirs could reach, was dead; to Christ, who could awaken him in a moment, he was only "asleep." The use of sleep as a synonym for death was not a new use of the word. See Job 7:21; Jer. 51:39, 57; Dan 12:2. Mark what new and sweet significance, however, it acquired as it fell from the lips of Christ and his followers. Matt. 9:24; 27:52; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor. 15:6; 1 Thess. 4:13.

Christ is glad "for their sakes" that he was not by the sick bed of Lazarus, "to the intent" that they might believe. Every miracle was to them a step to a higher faith. *Not there*—for, as Bengel observes, "none ever died in the presence of the Prince of Life." If he had been there he would merely have cured a sick man instead of raising a dead one. *Let us go unto him*—not unto the sisters, be it noted. To Christ, Lazarus is still as though living. Nothing is able to separate us from the love and the presence of Christ—"neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come."

LAZARUS BURIED.—17–38. For four days. This was the climax of all the miracles of his power over death. First a child was raised from its bed, then a youth on his bier, now a man in his grave. "Many of the Jews" were at Bethany to comfort Martha and Mary. Not surprising, for Lazarus was wealthy. That was shown by his being buried in his own sepulchre, instead of a grave in common, the precious box of spikenard broken by Mary, and the fact that Martha "was troubled about many things," which would not have been the case had she had the oversight of a poor household. Such conventional condolences lasted seven days. 1 Sam. 31:13; 1 Chr. 10:12; see, also, 1 Chr. 7:22; Job. 2:11.

Martha's Interview.—20–28. Martha, hearing of Jesus' coming, goes out to meet him, impelled both by the impatience of love, and the desire to see him away from the presence of the Jews that thronged the house, some of whom were undoubtedly hostile to the Saviour. *If thou hadst been here*, etc. Not a reproach, because, as has been shown, he could not have been there. But the most torturing thought of her present anguish is—that it might have been so different if he had only been present. *But I know*, etc. Daring thought!—she thinks that even now it may not be too late. We may safely assume that the raising of the little maiden and the son of the widow of Nain is known to her. Perhaps—but it is too great a boon directly to ask, so she only by implication suggests it. But note the mingling of high and low conceptions. She thinks Lazarus can be restored. Marvelous faith! But not of himself but only in answer to his prayer. Just as marvelous a misconception of his divine power. To correct her error is the aim of what follows. *Thy brother shall rise—I know.* Her answer is as though she said: "I know *that*, but that is not what I refer to; I want him raised *now*." By fitting the related clauses to each other we can better understand his reply—"I am the resurrection; he that believeth on me though he were dead yet shall he live. I am the life; whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." It is not necessary to emphasize the fact that this is a general statement referring to the life of the soul. But it is a general statement which in its application to the case of Lazarus includes the restoration of physical life. In this statement he turns her eyes from the future resurrection to the present cause of all resurrection. She is to understand that if Lazarus ever lives at all, it will be because Christ gives him life. It is left for her to infer that he can now give him life as well as then. But this sermon of one text has another application than to the case of Lazarus. It applies personally to her. It is not only a question whether Lazarus shall live, but whether she shall also. *Believest thou this?* He had just said, *Whosoever believeth.* Hence this, the practical application of the Saviour. Apparently she does not fully understand all that he says, but she avows her belief in him as the Son of God with all that that involves. And she immediately goes away, apparently encouraged by this glimpse of a present power instead of a future resurrection.

Mary's Interview.—29–38. In response to the secret hint of Martha she goes forth, followed by the Jews, who, however, suppose she goes to the grave to mourn. In this way is providentially provided the best, because the most hostile, witnesses of the miracle. The characteristics of the two sisters are well shown in their meeting with the Saviour. Martha finds no lack of words; Mary falls at his feet—eloquent only in tears. Her only ejaculation is the same as was Martha's, word for word—touching proof of how often they must have said it to each other before he came.

And now there ensued a wonderful scene. In our translation it is said that Jesus looking upon the weeping of Mary and of those around her, "groaned in the spirit and was troubled." In the translation the language has lost both in meaning and intensity of expression. "*Groaned*" in the original tongue has in it the idea of strong indignation and displeasure rather than of grief. Indignation at what? Some think at the hostile attitude of the Jews then present, others at the unbelief of Mary and Martha, and others at himself that he should be so strongly affected. But the best and most convincing suggestion is that he was indignant at the power of sin in causing misery and death. He could, indeed, in this instance, relieve the suffering, but the affliction of Martha and Mary typified the anguish which, as the result of sin, was present everywhere throughout the world. It was the sin-caused woe of a world that caused this tumult of divine wrath. *Jesus wept.*

Storms of wind sometimes precede gentle showers. And so here. Strong indignation toward sin was followed by a compassionate weeping for the sinner. What a spectacle—the Son of God in tears! And in tears for human sorrow. That is a fact for hours of doubt and gloom—a comfort for our deepest distress. Two other times did Jesus weep. Luke 19:41; 22:44.

As Jesus approaches the tomb some of the Jews make the sneering remark that the one who had opened the eyes of the one born blind could have caused that even this man should not die. It was a remark that impugned both the veracity of that miracle and of his love. It was as much as to say: "If he really loved him why didn't he show it by preventing his death—if he could do so?" *Jesus therefore again groaning.* Again that tumult of indignation, and this time we may readily guess the cause of it.

LAZARUS RISEN.—39–57. The first thing noticeable is Martha's failure of faith. In the face of such facts, we do not wonder that for a moment it failed. Faith soars to blissful heights at times, but finds it difficult to sustain itself there. *Said I not*—to the messenger. 4. *They roll away the stone.* That was all they could do. Jesus did not do their work—they could not do his. We can not speak a soul to life—but we can roll away the stone, and loose the fetters by which it was bound.

THE PRAYER. That is a singular one—for it is a thanksgiving for prayer already heard, and the answer registered. When? Perhaps in that two days of tarrying. It was one of the necessary steps in fulfilling the design of the miracle, as expressed in verse 4. It was "for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." The Jews had accused him of having a devil, and working miracles through Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This direct appeal to God in their hearing, endorsed, as it was, by the miracle that followed, was an unanswerable refutation of that charge. So Elijah prayed to God on Mt. Carmel, and was answered. 1 K. 18:36. *Lazarus, come forth!* How simple is the narrative—how astounding is the event. The majesty of the miracle stands out unadorned by any trickery of rhetoric. The command is, as it were, the echo of that other fiat: "Let there be light—and there was light." "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:29.

The *result* of this miracle was that "many of the Jews" that were present believed on Jesus, and that the Sanhedrim, frightened by the hold that he was obtaining through his miracles upon the people, passed the decree of death upon him. Hitherto, all efforts to kill him had been individual, and unauthorized. Now the purpose had the sanction of official authority. The miracle that recalled Lazarus from the tomb was the final act that hurried Christ into it. In calling him back he virtually took his place.

Short-Range Topics.

1.—God sometimes delays the blessings we pray for, but if he does, we may be sure it is to give us greater ones—"above all we can ask or think." Ps. 30:5; 31:22; Is. 49:13, 14; 54:7, 8; Rom. 11:1, 2; 2 Cor. 4:17; 2 Pet. 3:8, 9.

2.—Christ calls a believer in him *a friend;* and the death of a believer a *sleep.* But the "sleep" of the unbeliever *is the second death.* Luke 12:9; John 3:36; Gal. 5:19–21; 2 Thess. 2:12; Rev. 21:8.

3.—Christ our present life and our future resurrection. "Whosoever"—not "believeth" alone, but—"*liveth* and believeth in me shall never die." For them the power and terror of death shall be taken away. John 15:6; Is. 25:8; Hos. 13:14; 1 Cor 15:54–57; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14, 15.

4.—By weeping at the grave Jesus sanctified our sorrow for those that depart from us. But we are not to weep as those who have no hope. 1 Thess. 4:13, 14; 2 Sam. 12:19–23.

5.—When all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, what then will be *our* resurrection? Shall we come forth in joy or in misery; in boldness or in terror; in confidence or in shame? Shall we hear the words: "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? or "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepare for the devil and his angels"? Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:32, 46; Rom. 2:5-9; 1 Cor. 15:52; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:16.

BLACKBOARD.

ALL THAT ARE IN
THE GRAVES
Shall Hear His Voice
AND COME FORTH.

They that have Done Good
to the
RESURRECTION OF LIFE.
They that have Done Evil
to the
RESURRECTION OF
DAMNATION.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—There was one home where Jesus loved to go. It was the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus, and it was in Bethany. (Show where Bethany was, and make the way to it from Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives as real as possible.) After Jesus had told them about the Good Shepherd they wanted once more to kill him, and so he went away beyond Jordan. (Show about where.) When he went away Lazarus fell sick. Martha and Mary watched over him night and day, but it was evident that he was going to die. Then they sent a message to Jesus saying: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." They did not *ask* him to come home, for that would be dangerous.

2.—Tell the rest in as simple language as you can command, often recalling the incidents. The reply to the message — his tarrying for two days, because he loved them and why—his talk with his disciples—death a sleep—with a happy awakening if we believe in him — the devotion of Thomas — Jesus' arrival at Bethany — Lazarus dead for four days. Martha's interview with Christ—learns to believe in him and not in a future resurrection. Mary's interview — what her tears did — Christ's weeping with her — the evil minded Jews — the rolling away of the stone (human hands could do that)—the command, "Lazarus, come forth"—the answer—the loosing of the grave-clothes (human hands could do that, too)—the happy re-united family. *Thought:* If Christ wept over Lazarus dead is he not much more sorry over over those who are dead in sins?

MEMORY VERSE.

Lift up your glad voices
In triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen
And man can not die.

BLACKBOARD.

Whosoever { LIVETH / BELIEVETH
IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE.

LESSONS FOR THIRD QUARTER.

July	4	The Word Made Flesh,...	John 1: 1-14	Aug.	22	Jesus the Christ,.	John 7: 40-46
"	11	Following the Lamb,.....	John 1: 35-46	"	29	Freedom by the Truth,....	John 8: 28-36
"	18	Jesus at the Marriage,....	John 2: 1-11	Sept.	5	The Light of the World,..	John 9: 1-11
"	25	The New Birth,.....	John 3: 7-17	"	12	The Good Shepherd,.....	John 10: 1-11
Aug.	1	The Water of Life,.....	John 4: 5-15	"	19	The Resurrection and the Life,.	John 11: 34-44
"	8	Jesus at Bethesda,.... ...	John 5: 5-15				
"	15	The Bread of Life,.....	John 6: 47-58	"	26	*Review.*—Christ Rejected..	John 11: 47-53

LESSON XXXIX.—SEPT. 26, 1875.—REVIEW.—CHRIST REJECTED.

SCRIPTURE.—John 11 : 47-58. Commit 47-58; Primary Verse, 47.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

GOLDEN TEXT.—**"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."**—Is. 53:3.

TOPIC.—Christ the Potent Word.

HOME READINGS.

M. Jno 1: 1-14..The Word Made Flesh. / Jno 1: 35-46..Following the Lamb.
T. Jno 2: 1-11..Jesus at the Marriage. / Jno 3: 7-17..The New Birth.
W. Jno 4: 5-15..The Water of Life. / Jno 5: 5-15..Jesus at Bethesda.
Th. Jno 6: 47-58..The Bread of Life. / Jno 7: 40-48..Jesus the Christ.
F. Jno 8: 28-36..Freedom by the Truth. / Jno 9: 1-11..The Light of the World.
S. Jno 10: 1-11..The Good Shepherd. / Jno 11: 34-44..The Resurrection and the Life.
S. John 11: 47-58..Christ Rejected.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.—What four things is Christ called in John 1: 1-14? Why called "The Word"? Why "Life"? Why "Light"? What is said in them about the New Birth? What two disciples followed Christ? 1: 37, 40. Who next? 41. Who next? 43. Who next? 45. *How* was each one led to follow Christ? What did Christ tell Nathanael about himself? 47, 48. What was the first miracle of Christ? 2: 1. Where? Who asked him to do it? What was the result of it? Who came to see Jesus by night? 3: 1. What two things did Jesus tell him about? Which one showed God's love for us?

CHRIST OUR SUSTENANCE.—At what well did Jesus rest? 4: 6. Who met him there? What did Christ ask of her? What did Christ tell her? Whose need was greatest—Christ's or her's? Whom did Jesus cure by the pool of Bethesda? How long had he been diseased? How did Jesus cure him? What is Christ called in chapter 6: 48? Why? How many had he fed? What did he say about eating his flesh? What did he mean? At the Feast of the Tabernacles what great question arose? 7: 12. What was Christ called by some? 40. What by others? 41. What did the officers say? 46. What proof did the people give that Jesus was divine? 31.

CHRIST OUR DELIVERER.—What was the *price* of our soul liberty? 8: 28. To become true disciples what must we do? 31. What is the *way* to liberty. 31. Who is the Way and the Truth? What is the *foe* to liberty? 34. Where did Jesus heal a man blind from his birth? What did his disciples think was the cause of his blindness? 9: 2. What did he do to the blind man? What did he tell him to do? What did the neighbors say about it? The parents? The Jews? What did Christ call a minister? 10: 2. What did he mean by a *Sheepfold*? The *Door*? The *Porter*? *Thieves and Robbers*? *The Hireling*? *The Sheep*? *The Good Shepherd*? Who did Christ raise from the tomb? How long had he been dead? Who were present? What did Jesus do at the grave? What did he say? What happened?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

There are two noticeable things in the rejection of Christ by the Jews. 1st.—They admit that "this man doeth many miracles." In this they are not entirely without modern imitators. But, though they can no longer deny his miracles, and are afraid that he will work still others, they contemptuously refer to him as "this man"—a phrase, also, common to those who follow in their footsteps. All civil power had been taken away from the Jews by the Romans, and to them was left only the hierarchal rule. The loss of this they refer to in expressing their fear that the Romans would come and "take away both their place and their nation." 2d.—The unconscious prophecy of Caiaphas. Through the lips of a malicious man spoke the voice of the high-priest, uttering, unknown to himself, the divine truth, that "one man should die for the people." What he himself thought was a wicked decree in reality was an official declaration that in that year a greater and more universal sacrifice for sins was to be offered than that which, as high-priest, he was wont to offer for the people once a year. Heb. 9: 7. In that prediction high-priestly prophecy became extinct; its last being an enunciation of the foundation truth of the new dispensation. Was ever there a more remarkable illustration of the fact that God can make even the wrath of man to praise him? We have, in the prophecy of Caiaphas, one proof of the potency of the Word, in that its office was compelled to be so accurately described by the lips of one of its worst enemies.

REVIEW CHART.

Christ the Word.

	LESSONS.		FACTS.				APPLICATIONS.			
	NO.	TITLE.	WHEN.	WHERE.	WHO.	WHAT.	TOPICS.	TEXTS.	TEACHINGS.	
CHRIST OUR LIFE.	XXVII.	W. F.	In the beginning.	——	The Word.	Was with God..was God..was True Light..True Life ..Made flesh.	The Deity of——	"God was manifest"—	Jesus—God's Word of love to man.	SPIRITUAL BIRTH.
	XXVIII.	F. L.	"Next day"	Betha—	John the B-And. JnoPet Phil. Nath.	"Behold the".."come and" .."Andrew first findeth".. under the fig tree.	Seek ye the Lord—	"These are they"—	Taste and see that the Lord is good. "To-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts."	
	XXIX.	J. M.	"Third day"	Cana.	Mary, 5 disciples, Jesus, Jesus' bret'n	Wedding..the want..water made wine.	Joy for——	"This beginning"—	Man's extremity God's opportunity..Christ's power to change poor things into good.	
	XXX.	N. B.	Christ's first sojourn at Jerusalem.	Jeru—	Jesus, Nico——	Nicodemus by night..except a man be born again..as Moses lifted up..	New in——	"As many as"——	Must be born again.."Whosoever believeth"..	
CHRIST OUR SUSTENANCE.	XXXI.	W. L.	Soon after	Jacobs w—	Jesus, Samaritan wom—	Jesus weary..woman for water.. "Thou wouldest have asked me."	Spiritual Th—	"Therefore with joy"—	Christian experience to be like an *ever*-flowing *over*-flowing well.	SPIRITUAL GROWTH.
	XXXII.	J. B.	Sabbath.	Pool of B—	Jesus, Impotent M—	Man infirm for 38 years.. "Rise, take up thy bed".. "Sin no more."	Man's Impo—	"I am the Lord that"—	Man the impotent sinner..Christ the omnipotent Saviour.	
	XXXIII.	B. L.	——	Desert place near Be——	Jesus, Jews.	Feeding of five thousand.. Bread from heaven.	Spiritual Hun—	"This is the bread"—	Christ the sustenance of our spiritual life.	
	XXXIV.	J. C.	Feast of Purim.	Jeru—	Jesus, Jews.	The discussion..this is a prophet..Christ.. "Never man spake like this."	Christ hidden ——	"The Lord hath"—	"Seek and ye shall find; knock and".. "ye shall seek me and shall *not* find me."	
CHRIST OUR DELIVERER.	XXXV.	F. T.	Same.	Same.	Same.	The price of liberty..the way to liberty..the foe to liberty.	Spiritual lib—	"To proclaim liberty"—	Free only in Christ..in him free indeed.	SPIRITUAL VICTORY.
	XXXVI.	L. W.	Sab.—	Pool of Si—	Jesus blind man.	The Light needed..Light given..Light manifest.	Spiritual bli—	"Open thou mine eyes"	"The night cometh"——	
	XXXVII.	G. S.	Same.	Jeru—	Jesus, Jews.	The false shepherds..true shepherds..hireling..Good Shepherd.	Shepherd's love—	"He shall feed his"—	"He leadeth me beside the still waters."	
	XXXVIII	R. L.	About six mos. before crucifixion.	Beth—	Jesus, Martha, Mary, Jews.	Lazarus dead ... buried ... risen.	Victory over—	"I will ransom"—	"New creatures in Christ."	

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

REVIEW EXERCISE.

[NOTE.—First call out from the scholars the titles of the lessons for the quarter and put them in their order upon the board. Then take up the Review Exercise. The answers may be made by classes, or by individuals as may seem best. The references should be distributed the week beforehand, and the scholars urged to commit them to memory. In answering let each one name the chapter and verse. As it will greatly reduce the labor of preparation and be a great convenience in every way, we have induced the publishers to print extra copies of this Exercise with the Chart (making four pages) which may be had from them at the rate of $1.00 per 100 copies.]

Christ our Life—Spiritual Birth.

Scripture.—Rev. 19: 1–16.

Hymn.—"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

TITLES. *Supt.*—What verse in the first chapter of John gives the title to our first lesson for the quarter?

Sch.—1: 14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

What verses give the title to the second lesson?

1: 36, 37. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

What to the third, and what is its title?

2: 2. And both Jesus was called and his disciples, to the marriage.

Why was the fourth lesson called "The New Birth"?

3: 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God.

TEXTS.—What Golden Text shows the divinity of Christ the Word?

God was manifest in the flesh.

What one speaks of devotion to Christ under all circumstances?

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

What one shows that the miracle at Cana was the first one?

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

What one tells us how we may become the sons of God?

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.

TOPICS.—What does the first lesson teach?

The Deity of Christ.

What is the main thought of the second lesson?

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near.

What does the third lesson show that Christ came to give?

Joy for mourning.

What happy thought is there for every one in the fourth lesson?

New in Christ Jesus.

FACTS.—What in the first lesson shows the eternal existence of Christ?

1, 2. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

What shows his humanity?

14. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

What proves that he is the Creator?

3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

What indicates that he is the source of *our* life?

4. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

What other name has he that compares him to the sun?

9. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

How was he received by the world?

10, 11. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own and his own received him not.

What proof have we in this lesson of the potency of the Word?

12. But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

In the second lesson what is the gracious invitation that Christ gave to the two disciples?

39. He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

What did they find out about Christ?

41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

What proof have we in this lesson of the potency of Christ the Word?

48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

How did the mother of Jesus show her faith in him?

2: 1–3. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples to the marriage.

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

What sort of wine did Jesus make at the marriage?

10. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine: and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

What in the third lesson shows the potency of Christ?

11. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

What was the opinion of a very learned man concerning Jesus?

3: 2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

What was Jesus' opinion concerning him?

3, 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he can not see the kingdom of God.
Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?

How was Christ like the brazen serpent?

14, 15. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

What in the fourth lesson shows again the potency of Christ?

15. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Christ our Sustenance — Spiritual Growth.

Scripture.—Eph. 4: 1–5.

Hymn.—"Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah."

TITLES.—What verse gives the title to the fifth lesson?

4: 14. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

What to the sixth?

5: 2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

What to the seventh?

6: 48. I am that bread of life.

What to the eighth?

7: 41. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

TEXTS.—What Golden Text shows that it is a happy thing to be a Christian?

With joy ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation.

What text represents God as a physician?

I am the Lord that healeth thee.

What one compares Christ to manna?

This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

What one shows that Christ was not chosen of men?

The Lord hath anointed me.

TOPICS.—What topic indicates our need of the Water of Life?

Spiritual Thirst.

What one our need of God?

Man's Impotence — God's Omnipotence.

What one our need of the Bread of Life?

Spiritual Hunger.

Which one suggests that Christ will not be found except to those who humbly seek him?

Christ hidden—Christ revealed.

FACTS.—What proof have we in the fifth lesson that Jesus was like us?

4: 6, 7. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being weary with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.
There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

What water, better than that of Jacob's well, did Jesus offer to give her?

13, 14. Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:
But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

What two things did Jesus say to the man at the pool of Bethesda who had had an infirmity for thirty-eight years?

5: 8, 14. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.
Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

What verse in the seventh lesson shows Christ both as our spiritual food and an atoning sacrifice?

6: 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

What verses in the eighth lesson tell what the people thought about Christ?

7: 40, 41, 46. Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.
Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?
The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

What one proved that he was indeed the Christ?

42. Hath not the Scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Christ our Deliverer — Spiritual Victory.

Scripture.—Ps. 34: 1–22.

Hymn.—Sunday School War Cry, (Royal Diadem, page 115.)

TITLES.—Where will we find the reason for the title of the ninth lesson?

8: 32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

In what verse is the title of the tenth lesson to be found?

9: 5. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.

Why is Christ called "The Good Shepherd"?

10: 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

What is the title of the twelfth lesson, and why is it so called?

11: 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

TEXTS.—What Golden Text announces Christ's mission to those that are the slaves of sin?

To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

What one shows the aid we need to be interested in the Bible?

Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

If we follow Christ which one tells what he will do for us?

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.

Which one promises us a victory over death?

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.

TOPICS.—What topic suggests that only the Christian is really free?

Spiritual liberty.

What one describes the care that Christ has over us?

The Shepherd's love.

Which one indicates that we shall have no fear of death.

Victory over the grave.

FACTS.—Of what were people to be sure when Christ was on the cross?

8:28. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father has taught me I speak these things.

What shows that the sinner is a slave?

34. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

How is he to be made free?

36. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Why did Christ, though those who had sought his life were near, heal the man blind from his birth?

9:4. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

What did he do to him?

6, 7. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,
And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

What was the blind man's opinion of Jesus?

31, 32. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.
Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

How are we to tell a bad minister from a good one?

10:1, 2. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

Who is the "Door"?

9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.

Who is the "Good Shepherd"?

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

How did Christ show his sympathy for Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus?

11:35, 36. Jesus wept.
Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

How did he show his power?

43, 44. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

What part did man have to do with this miracle?

41, 44. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.
Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

What was the result of it?

45, 53. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.
Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

What more wonderful miracle like this is yet to happen in which *we* shall have an interest?

5:28, 29. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,
And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

THIS month we have tried a new plan for a Review Exercise. It is not best, so Sunday-school men say, to run in ruts. Therefore we strike out on a new track — perhaps before our friends are quite familiar with the old one. We hope that the superintendents will immediately turn to the exercise and look it over, so that if they desire to have extra copies of it they may have ample time to order them. A limited number, only, will be printed. The design has been to obtain a Scriptural review of the lessons for the last three months—a sort of Bible reading upon them. It is not meant to supersede a closer examination and drill. After trial we will feel personally obliged if our friends will express their opinion of its comparative merits.

AND this time it is *Zion's Herald* that is in despair about the Sunday-school. In its opinion "it requires no ordinary intelligence, a pretty rich imagination, and hours of study to bring out into their proper relations all the divisions of a modern lesson, and enforce it so as

to interest and instruct a class of boys and girls." The result, according to its observation, is that those who "could teach and illustrate the former plain Bible lessons" are superseded by "young, inexperienced, and not specially spiritual minded instructors." Well, now, that is easily remedied. Mr. Moderator, we move that all lesson expositions, commentaries, and Biblical helps be interdicted in the Sunday-school. We pause for a second to the motion from *Zion's Herald.*

BUT, alas! that is not all. It looks upon the session of the Sunday-school as "a simple scene of study and innocent gratification, with religious text books and decent regard for proprieties." "They are secular and not positively religious." The most plaintive proof of this is that "the street Arabs find nothing uncongenial in a modern Sunday-school picnic to their uncultivated tastes." In this case we are not quite so clear as to what the *Herald* wants. We do not know exactly what to do with that "innocent gratification with religious text books and decent regard for proprieties," and await further suggestions from our contemporary. But as to those "street Arabs" we can make it so uncomfortable for *them* that they will never come again. Will *that* be satisfactory as far as it goes?

OVER and over again have we called the attention of the church to the fact that the child and it are far separated. Something should be done to remedy the matter. The child's rightful place is in the church, but he is likely to be thoroughly weaned from it, as things go. Rev. G. N. Marden, speaking of the Congregational churches in Maine, says that the proportion of church members, so far as heard from, under twenty years of age, *is less than five per cent.* Four churches having a membership of over one hundred each, *report none*, and the same is true of twenty-six churches having an aggregate membership of 1414. We are not disposed to think that the Congregational churches in that state are the only ones that are lax on this point. Neither can we believe that the facts are to be attributed to the Sunday-school. Perhaps, the real reason why the children are not oftener seen in the pews is, because there is no room for them in the church. Practically the church is saying to the children: "We can not have anything to do with you till you are of age."

IN the Presbyterian church the children of believers are made, by the Westminster Confession of Faith, members of the visible church, but not members in full communion. To become members in full communion, the "Directory" says they must arrive at "years of discretion" and have "sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body," besides, of course, showing evidences of true piety. We can see how puzzling "these rules" may be. What are "years of discretion," and what is the "discernment of the Lord's body"? Either from inability to solve these questions, or from other causes, practically the children do not enter into full communion in that church until they reach maturity. What are "years of discretion" is left to "the prudence of the eldership," but the "prudence" of the eldership is such that they run no risks, as a rule, in admitting young children. Dr. H. A. Nelson, who loves to see the children not only members of the church visible, but also of the church actual, has suggested that years of discretion are reached when children can "worthily partake of the Lord's Supper," and they can "discern the Lord's body" when they understand that the Son of God died for their sins, when they know and confess themselves sinners, and, with sincere sorrow ask the Lord Jesus Christ to save them, and believe that he does, and when they know that the bread and the cup mean the flesh and blood of the Saviour, and that the eating and drinking of them signify their taking him as their Saviour. The

suggestion seems sound, and certainly worthy of thought is his question: "In every church which Christ blesses with true spiritual motherhood, will there not be little communicants"?

W. H. DOANE is the author of *Royal Diadem*, a Sunday-school singing book that has had a very large sale. We presume that one of the things that Mr. Doane would insist upon as necessary to good singing is, that the children should thoroughly understand the words. One of his songs has the chorus: "Ever this the war cry: Victory! Victory!" and yet, in his own school, under his own leadership, a little boy was lately lustily singing: "*Pass around the wash-rag, Victory! Victory*"! Yes, and when at home he was corrected for so doing, he insisted he was right. Mr. Doane, please pass around the ——!

IT is not all done by appliances. Mrs. A. C. Winters narrates, in the *Baptist Teacher*, how a friend of hers attended the Sunday-school of one of the largest and wealthiest churches in the city of Brooklyn. Soft carpets were on the floor; maps, charts, and beautiful drawings adorned the frescoed walls; a professional organist faultlessly accompanied the singing. All that wealth and taste could do were freely expended—for the sake of "some thirty uninterested children." On the same day he visited the Bethel Mission, and found in that, though it does not have half so many attractions, full a thousand vivacious, wide-awake children. The stirring singing they have at the Bethel is suggested as the reason of the difference. We have been there, and know better. That aids, no doubt, but the main attraction there is the hearty Christian earnestness that pervades the school. "Charley" Morton has only one hand, but there are few that get in there that do not feel its warm grip.

IN the May number of Harper's appeared an exquisite little poem by John Hay on "Religion and Doctrine." It is so appropriate to the first lesson of the month that we can not let our readers miss the privilege of reading it:

He stood before the sanhedrim;
The scowling rabbis gazed at him;
He recked not of their praise or blame;
There was no fear, there was no shame
For one upon whose dazzled eyes
The whole world poured its vast surprise.
The open heaven was far too near,
His first day's light too sweet and clear,
To let him waste his new-gained ken
On the hate-clouded face of men.

But still they questioned, Who art thou?
What hast thou been? What art thou now?
Thou art not he who yesterday
Sat here, and begged beside the way,
For he was blind.

—And I am he;
For I was blind, but now I see.

He told the story o'er and o'er;
It was his full heart's only lore;
A prophet on the Sabbath day
Had touched his sightless eyes with clay,
And made him see, who had been blind.
Their words passed by him like the wind
Which raves and howls, but can not shock
The hundred-fathom-rooted rock.

Their threats and fury all went wide;
They could not touch his Hebrew pride;
Their sneers at Jesus and his band,
Nameless and homeless in the land,
Their boasts of Moses and his Lord,
All could not change him by one word.

I know not what this man may be,
Sinner or saint; but as for me,
One thing I know, that I am he
Who once was blind, and now I see.

They were all doctors of renown,
The great men of a famous town,
With deep brows, wrinkled, broad and wise,
Beneath their wide phylacteries;
The wisdom of the East was theirs,
And honor crowned their silver hairs;
The man they jeered and laughed to scorn
Was unlearned, poor, and humbly born;
But he knew better far than they
What came to him that Sabbath day;
And what the Christ had done for him
He knew, and not the sanhedrim.

OUR blackboard exercises have been, perhaps, severely simple. Occasionally there is one who would like to see artistic lettering, crowns and crosses, swords and serpents, and big letters standing as the

initial to half-a-dozen words, like a big corporal marching before a handful of small, lean, timorous recruits. Oh yes, and they want angels, and harps, and soldiers, and shields, and castles—all on a blackboard. Now there are three reasons why we can't furnish them. The first is that we don't like their looks as they appear in our exchanges. We can not be reconciled to the thought of making *such* an exhibition! The second one is that they would be of no practical use—*the majority of our superintendents do not draw.* They are equal only to plain lettering. There are some real "blackboard artists," like Frank Beard, who can do wonderful things with different colored crayons. One likes to see what can be done in this way, the same as one likes to see a remarkable prestidigitateur—but ordinary people would not think of attempting to imitate either of them. The third reason is—that they are so well liked as they are. When superintendents go to the expense of having them put upon tasty cards to be hung up in the Sunday-school as a perpetual reminder, and as the best expression, of the truths they set forth, we are pretty well assured that they are better than clever, but inimitable picture allegories.

THE annual report of the Iowa S. S. Secretary, Hon. R. H. Gilmore, was a very happy and a very manly effort, and somewhat pungent withal. He says that "the cry came up from the people that the big boys were not fascinated with the attractions advertised for children, and did not take kindly to food prepared for babes." That is a fair hit on the usual estimate of the Sunday-school as merely a children's affair. But about the "food" we are not quite so clear. Sunday-school editors prepare *that*, and—well, we can't smile at that part of the remark. His next slant was at the pastors. "We found," he says, "that the shepherds were too much inclined to repose alone in the 'green pastures,' and let the lambs take care of themselves." Then Iowa, alas, is not any better off in this respect than other states. One of the "district" workers was asked to take part in a convention, and replied that he was willing to do so in any convention that might be held in *his* district. Our Secretary compares him to a fence-viewer who advertised that if anybody had any fences to be viewed "to bring 'em 'round." Henceforth, the Secretary hopes, the Convention will appoint no one "who needs to be labored with." Keen chap, that fellow.

THE "Lake Bluff Sunday School Assembly," that was designed to be a Western copy of the Chautauqua gathering, has been postponed for a year, on account of inability to get the grounds ready in time. When the plans were laid before us, we thought that to do all that was mapped out would be hardly possible in the time proposed. But, then, our Methodist brethren are so energetic, and—well, we were curious to see how much they *could* do, and so we encouraged them on. If they had succeeded, we should have tried to have said Amen as loudly as any of them. As it is—we will wait till next year.

IT would seem that normal classes are to be of more service than was originally supposed possible. The one in Plainfield, N. J., has published an excellent typographical outline map of Palestine, on which the height of all parts of the land above the Mediterranean is accurately noted. By it one can very readily get a good idea of the comparative elevations of the Holy Land. The map is the result of very careful comparisons by O. B. Leonard, of that class, of the latest surveys by the Palestine Exploration Society, and Tristram, Palmer, and Robinson. It can be furnished to those who desire it for only twenty to twenty-five cents. We hope the class will push its critical labors still further.

THE time will certainly come—*must* come, when more enquiry will be made

into the qualifications of those who are permitted to take the responsibility of teaching young, immortal souls. They teach for time and for eternity, and a mere good appearance and church membership ought not to be potent credentials to such a position. Rev. Geo. A. Peltz thinks in the same way, and thus says so in the *Baptist Teacher:*

It is a shame to heedlessly put into position as preacher, or as teacher, a person who is morally or mentally unfit for the post. Adults, however, can take care of their own interests, and withdraw from such care if they please; but the child may drink error, or nonsense, week after week, and who shall interpose for its help? Let this peril be precluded by careful examination of all the candidates for a teacher's place.

THERE is no telling what Crafts will do next! He has frequently surprised us, but never so much as when we received from him a package of samples of various Sunday-school inventions. In it was a piece of red cotton cloth, about a foot square, printed on both sides. On one side was the enticing heading: "STRAWBERRY SHORT-CAKE," and under it were pieces of prose and poetry, almost illegible, *apropos* to that delicious dish. On the other was more poetry and lots of advertisements. Mr. Crafts can't realize how cruelly he has puzzled us. If we had not heard of the handkerchiefs that were made for the Hottentots we never should have guessed the use of this. It is a handkerchief, then, meant for little mission-school children. But, how rough the cloth is! And is—is printer's ink good for the noses of the little heathen?

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

WE like the way the *Augsburg Teacher* defines "dogmatic *teaching*." It says that it is simply this: "*I say it is so, and you keep still!*" A theological professor would have missed on that entirely.—*Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament* is exceedingly accurate in its notes on the original text. The *Illustrated Christian Weekly* recommends its general use by clergymen, for the reason that "a revival of careful exegetical study of the Bible in the original must accompany that revival of lay study of the Scriptures in the vernacular, which has already taken place—if the pulpit is not content to be left far behind the pews." Now the dominies have fair notice.——Our friend, Dr. Gulliver, writing for the *Sunday School World*, thinks that the present system of teaching in the Sabbath-school, "trains the child to feel that it is his right to be interested, and that when he is 'bored' by hard study or hard thinking, a wrong is done him, which he resents in vigorous terms." We are not so sure of this as he is. But as a minister of long experience, perhaps the Dr. can tell us how much more easy it is to suit the pews than the scholars. ——Some unknown exchange thus very forcibly puts the fact that, after all, the main thing in Sunday-school teaching is *results:* "You may throw the net very gracefully and admirably, but do you catch anything? No fishing is of any account that brings no fish. No Sunday-school teaching is of any account that catches no souls."——"Some persons," says W. T. Wylie, in the *Sunday School Times*, "have a wonderful skill in carving a rich and juicy roast, so that they secure all the bones and gristle which go with it, while they leave the nutritious portions untouched." He means those teachers who discourse on the hard facts of the lesson only, and let its teachings and its doctrines go by—who strip the kernels all off the ear and gravely present their classes with the cob.——Few causes are contributing so much to bring about fraternity of feeling as the united study of the International lessons. Dr. Stryker, speaking of this—also in the *Sunday School Times*

—says: "Notice how orthodox they are, and how they agree, and how Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians eat of the same crib, and derive nourishment and pleasure from the same corn. We feed on angels' food, and don't stop to think who ground the flour or baked the bread."———It appears that Roger Ascham, of the sixteenth century, resented the idea of committing Scripture to memory without first understanding it. He quaintly said: "Their whole knowledge was tied onely to their tong and lips, and never ascended up to the braine and head, and therefore was soon spitte out of the mouth againe."———Some keen-eyed observer saw a teacher fling down his class-book because the superintendent suggested, for the comfort of a crowded school, a more subdued tone of teaching; and, a short time after, he beheld a superintendent all "hunched up," because of some criticisms on his management, and ready to resign immediately, at the risk of throwing the whole school into confusion. These and other like instances suggested to him an article on "Folks who get their Backs up." There is a large sermon in the title alone. More than half the trouble in the world is caused by those who, cat-like, round up their spinal column on the least provocation. Altogether too much valuable time has to be spent in quietly stroking down, or, if very obstinate, in *flattening* down these dorsal elevations.———Mr. Moody declares: "The quicker we abolish the word 'children' from the Sabbath-school the better. We want to get the adults into the Sabbath- school, to teach them the Word of God." He believes, and we feel sure, that we are on the eve of a revolution on this point.———Oliver Wendell Holmes is getting orthodox. When the bear at Wellesley, Mass., died he sent a letter of condolence, in which he said: "I have a great respect for bears since those two female ones taught the children of Bethel and Belial that they must not be rude to elderly persons. I think a loose bear or two might be of service in our community, and I regret much the loss of an animal who might have done so much as a moral teacher for the young of this city and its suburbs."

Sunday School Work.

The Iowa State Sunday School Association is to follow up the work of its convention, in connection with the Y. M. C. A., by a fall campaign of gospel meetings along the lines of the C., M. & St. P. R. R. A state is not won by one grand annual meeting.———The number of churches that are becoming converts to the substitution of a Bible school for one of the two Sunday sermons is very rapidly on the increase. So far the Congregationalists seem to take most kindly to the idea. The churches at Cumberland and New Castle, Me., the one at South Amherst, Mass., and at East Derry, N. H., have adopted it, and report as the result both increased attendance and increased interest.———Rev. Henry Clay Trumbull has left Hartford for Philadelphia to assume the editorship of the *Sunday School Times*. Mr. John D. Wattles, who has been his assistant for the past five years, accompanied him to take the post of publisher. They did not get away, however, until the Sunday-school workers of Connecticut testified to the esteem in which they held them by a complimentary dinner, no end of good speeches, and a present to Mr. Trumbull of a set of *Lange* richly bound, and to Mr. Wattles of a handsome gold watch. Hon. Henry P. Haven, John E. Searles, Nelson Kingsbury, and other prominent Connecticut workers were present. By accepting this new charge Mr. Trumbull severs a connection with the American Sunday School Union of nearly twenty years' duration.

———Rev. Geo. A. Peltz takes the place of Mr. Trumbull as the editor of the "Sunday School Column" in the *Independent*, and the August number of the *Sunday School World* runs up his name over its department of "Normal Work" instead of that of its late Normal Secretary. Let us here suggest to the American Sunday School Union that people in the west can not see why that title, which now has no resting place, would not settle down very becomingly on the brow of Mr. Peltz.———But the new editor of that *Independent* column has given us an inkling (there ought to be an *s* between the *k* and the *l* of that word) of what we may expect from him. He corrects our item about Hon. Willard Hall, saying that he is not living, but died June 10th. He also informs us that Dr. Warren Randolph has declined the call to the church at Chelsea, Mass. And then he adds: "We know that a *monthly* can not be a *newspaper*, but it can keep clear of a musty odor." That only shows that Mr. Peltz is new in the business. We can't always do it—so long as we have to glean some of our items from our religious newspaper exchanges. There is no way of telling just how ancient and "musty" some of their news paragraphs are.——— The Stamford, Conn., Baptist Sunday-school celebrated its fiftieth anniversary July 4, and had down on its programme an original poem by Fanny Crosby and an address by Frank Beard. Some one, by the way, very effusively calls him "The Artist Apostle of the Blackboard." There is considerable "gush" about that.——— The "Bellefonte Press Company," of Bellefonte, Pa., are issuing every month a new "Bible Reading" with duplicate texts for distribution, published on a separate sheet. Some of the topics already treated are: "Conditions of Accepted Prayer;" "The King's Supper;" "Bible Words about Temperance," etc. This work is in response to a real demand. Ten cents will procure a sample of what they are doing.——— New York proposes to have a paid Sunday-school missionary to devote his whole time to "working up" that state in Sunday-school matters as it ought to be. A part of the funds is already raised. The rest should not be long in forthcoming. Those 831,820 children not yet gathered into her Sunday-schools, certainly need the whole time of at least *one* man.——— The Chicago Sunday-school teachers had their usual pleasant steamboat ride up the lake, and picnic on the shore this summer. They like it.——— Ralph Wells has had a severe illness this season, consequent from overwork. He ought to have somebody to act as a balance wheel for him. The fire under the boiler is too fervent, and when he gets to work the amount of steam pressure is altogether too great for one of his physical powers. Can't anybody "regulate" that man?———And now we hear of "The Life of Jesus the Messiah" set to poetry! We know nothing of the poetical merits of the work, but are unable to imagine how it could be better than a certain prose version (King James' we believe) of the same thing.———The First District Convention in Illinois meets at Freeport on the 22nd and 23rd days of September, with a preliminary meeting on the evening of the 21st. The programme for that occasion is an attractive one, and the "talent" that will be there will justify the very largest turnout. Put a pin down against those dates.———It is stated that the Sunday-school connected with the Congregational church, Bethlehem, Conn., has been working uninterruptedly for 135 years. Are there any papers for that? ———Rev. John Hall takes his vacation by speaking for the American Sunday School Union through the west.——— Our friend, Dr. C. R. Blackall, is writing the lessons for the *Standard*, of this city. But why don't that paper say so?——— The Executive Committee of the M. E. church must have found its elders rather intractable in Sunday-school matters, for it offers a prize of fifty dollars for the best eight-page tract on "The Relations and Duties of the Presiding Eldership

to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church." If the tracts won't reform them what next? ——The New York State Convention at Syracuse was one of the largest gatherings of the kind. Over one thousand delegates are reported to have been present, besides which, of course, there was the large local attendance.——— Sunday crab-catching used to be the irresistible temptation to colored boys along the shore of Cape Fear. And no wonder, for it is exciting fun. But since Sunday-schools have been introduced there a change has taken place which is thus described by a pious old mammy: "Yes, massa, de tide now fall and de crab he *crawl;* he don't run no more like he did for to get away from de boys on Sunday."

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—F. Burnham, of Charles City, Ia., does not exactly agree with our remarks upon the way of providing for the expenses of the Sunday-school, which we made in this department in the July TEACHER, and expresses himself as follows:

I think there are some objections to pledging a certain amount for each month, among which are the unavoidable failures on the part of some of the children to meet their engagements. This would have a tendency to drive them out and away from the school; for children have a very high sense of honor. I don't believe in the church paying their expenses, either. If I wanted a dead Sunday-school I would say to our school: "Our papers and books and every thing we need will be furnished us. All you are to do is to receive them and be good children. There are no sacrifices for you to make for the general good." I would make all the scholars feel that they are responsible for the finances as well as the attendance — that it is *their* school, and that they have something to do in sustaining it. That which costs them something they will prize and appreciate.

We have adopted a very simple and successful plan in our school. Collection envelopes are distributed to each class every Sabbath. After school is dismissed the treasurer gathers them up, and on next Sabbath makes a report of amount collected, the largest amount given by any class, naming the class; also the smallest amount contributed, not naming the class; also the amount contributed by the officers. This creates a healthy emulation in giving, which we think is one way of doing good.

—All contributions to this department are welcome, but especially anything that has any valuable hints in it in relation to reviews. A. Carothers, of Carson, Kan., who is specially pleased with our Review Chart, and wants one published monthly, has this way of reviewing:

It is just as important to review monthly as quarterly, and with us much easier and more interesting. I put the review on the blackboard as you give it, every Sunday before school. As they arrive every scholar and teacher attends to the plan of the lesson on the board, and frequently there is considerable comment. At the close of the school as a general exercise I review the whole school from the board. On Sunday evening at the close of the month we meet and find the review for the month on the board ready for use. Every Sunday I give out the Home Readings, to be given the next Sunday in narrative style. At the review these are also used. The result is we have an interest in our Sunday-school beyond anything I have ever seen.

—Dr. P. S. Leisenring, of Ottawa, Pa., also sends us his plan. At the last quarter he reviewed the lessons for the first half of the year, building a monument of twenty-six blocks, on each of which was lettered the name of one of the lessons. As each block was needed it was borne to the platform by one of the scholars, and as it was put in place the facts of the lesson were called out. The monument was appropriately finished by placing a cross on its apex.

—"Enterprise" is creeping into the Sabbath-school. We have received from St. John's M. E. Bible School a tastefully printed handbill, meant for general distribution, which conspicuously exhibits this fact. It may be a way of guilelessly

catching people with guile, but the announcement sounds sensational. And is it come to this—that each school must have "a blackboard artist," and "the best one in America" at that? Well, well! But here is the announcement:

On next Sunday, July 18, 1875, at 2½ o'clock P. M., the Uniform Lesson for the day will be studied in Bible Language, in Blank Verse, in Poetry, and in Prose. Mr. John H. Bogart, the well-known Artist of our School, will make a beautiful picture, mounted on muslin, and executed in colors *expressly for the occasion*. Subject, "Jesus at the marriage."

☞ Our School is one whose Bible is full of pictures. Our Artist, we believe, is one of *the best* in America. ☜

We gladly, heartily, and urgently *entreat* you and your family, and all your friends and neighbors to come and study the Word of God with us. On behalf of Officers, Teachers, and Scholars of our Church-school,

DAVID A. MURPHY, Supt.

LITERATURE.

THE author of *Songs of the Sanctuary*, Charles S. Robinson, has produced a new book entitled *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. The former book was deservedly popular, containing as it did, a collection of the very best hymns and some of the best and most deeply devotional tunes, most happily wedded. The present book is much the same as the other, with the exception that there are more hymns and tunes, and a "Version of the Psalms"—not Rouse's—have been added. It certainly is one of the best collections of church music published. New York and Chicago: A. S. Barnes & Co.

PLAINLY the best contribution to Scripture natural history is the work on *Bible Animals*, by Rev. J. G. Wood. It is an octavo of 710 pages, very finely illustrated, and contains "a description of the habits, structure, and uses of every living creature mentioned in the Scriptures from the ape to the coral." Mr. Wood has already been made familiar to us through his elaborate works on "*Homes Without Hands*," "*Strange Dwellings*," "*Insects at Home*," etc. The present work has been before the public for some time, but now is presented in an enlarged and improved edition, on which the publishers have expended very great pains. The articles are interesting, instructive, and popularly written — written in a style that shows that the author was in love with his work. Dr. McCosh, of Princeton, contributes to the volume an article on "Evolution," and Rev. Daniel March, D. D., one on "Research and Travel in Bible Lands." And these two articles are no small additions to its attractions. It deserves a place in the Sunday-school teacher's library. Philadelphia: Bradley, Garretson, & Co. $4.75.

NEARLY everybody knows that to escape asthma Rev. Henry Ward Beecher annually spends the hay-fever months in the White Mountains. While there he holds daily services at the "Twin Mountain House," reading and familiarly commenting upon some portion of the Scriptures. Some of these informal talks have been gathered together and published by J. B. Ford & Co., under the apt title, *A Summer Parish*. What the character of such a work is we have no need to say. The book is beautifully bound, and has in it an excellent photograph of Mr. Beecher, by Rockwood. Chicago: W. B. Keen, Cooke, & Co. $1.50.

FROM the same house comes another tasty book, the *Abbé Tigrane*, a translation from the French of *Fabre*. It is a powerful and dramatic representation of the ambition and of the intrigues of a priest to become a bishop, then an archbishop, and at the last, leaves him with his longing eyes directed toward the tiara of Pope Pius IX. It has been hinted that this character, Rufinus Capdepont, but thinly veils a real personage. But the rumor probably arose from the exceedingly vivid and realistic character of the fiction and the daring conception of seizing upon the soon coming vacancy of the papal chair to add to the dramatic interest of the story. The taste of this is somewhat questionable, but it undeniably increases the thrilling power of the narrative. Chicago: W. B. Keen, Cooke & Co. $1.50.

WE do not particularly fancy *Trophies of Song*, by Rev. W. F. Crafts. It is a compilation of articles on sacred song, and of incidents concerning special songs. The articles are good, and some of the incidents are quite touching and effective, though in this regard they greatly vary; but the whole book lacks method and arrangement. Except that the articles and the incidents are classified, it looks as if the order was determined by the way they came out of the scrap book into which the items were originally garnered. Still the idea itself is a good one. Many a prayer-meeting could be made much more interesting if the pastor, in giving out a hymn, could tell somewhat of its history, and narrate instances of its power over sinners and of its comfort to saints. We hope that Mr. Crafts may give us a more carefully edited book, one better arranged, and less like a newspaper done up in covers. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.

THE

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LEADING IN PRAYER.

BY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

ONE of my most vivid remembrances of those sweet old New England Sabbaths is of sitting by my window, where a white curtain swelled like a sail in the summer wind, and learning from a little book, leather-covered and badly gnawed at the corners, the glorious old hymns that will survive generations of believers and unbelievers. I never doubted the utterances of that hymn-book, but accepted them as I did the Bible, and thus they have done me good service to this day. I can see just where on the page began the words:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed."

Even as a child this hymn made clear to me the thought that prayer was *asking*, not rendering service; that it was for *my* sake, not God's sake; that its lack was *my* loss, not God's loss; that it was not so much an ordinance, instituted by command, as a natural outgrowth of the necessities of soul and body, that must have come with the knowledge of a Giver.

Anticipating every doubt that might arise on the score of largess already bestowed, of unworthiness to receive, of the greatness or the insignificance of the want, the Bible meets us at every point with the fullest encouragement to make known our requests, and the completest assurance that they shall be heard and answered. There is no human communion and fellowship so close as that to which we are invited, and the humblest child of God may come freely to his Father with the small trials and perplexities that he would hardly name to his dearest earthly friend.

Go one step beyond this individual worship to that of the family. The conditions of prayer are in no way changed, but you introduce the element of representation. Hearts and lives are very close to each other in the family, and interests are so interwoven as to be mutual, yet the individual has special needs, and if you assume to stand as his representative before the King, one purpose of your prayer must be to present these in such a way that he can join heartily, and really make the petition his own. Short, direct petitions, expressed in clear, simple words can alone accomplish this. He can not follow you through a tangle of rhetoric whose meaning he only catches at the last word, and say *Amen* with any fervor. In the average family the majority of the members are young. Their need of

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prayer is a matter of belief rather than of feeling with them, but if you can make them see that the help you ask for is something that touches their actual material life, that comes right down to real flesh and blood troubles, you will teach them almost unconsciously to reach out their hands for the staff. Use the language in which your child thinks and his thought will follow you, but not otherwise. Do not fear to compromise your dignity or your religion by coming down to plain, every-day talk. While you are praying that you may be enabled to lay aside every weight, and overcome those weaknesses and infirmities by which your spiritual growth is hampered, the chances are that Johnny is watching the cat through his fingers; but when in an honest, earnest voice you beg the Lord to help you all to be good, to be kind and gentle and patient to each other, to put away selfishness, and live in purity and peace, and the sunshine of love, Johnny knows what it all means, and if it does not keep him from getting mad at Rob before night it will help him to be sorry for it afterwards. And do not confine your prayer too strictly to spiritual things. When the Lord furnished us the perfect model upon which to build our prayers, he included in its brief petitions one for daily bread. The physical world presses closely upon every fibre of your child's being, while the spiritual is vague and scarcely comprehended. Do not teach him to shut God out from this world in which his senses revel, but to ask and expect help and sympathy in his play, his work, and his studies. Faith has been aptly called a "blessed habit of the soul," and it is best learned, like all other habits, in childhood. When I was but five years old my little sister "fell asleep" and was laid in that same white-curtained room where I conned my hymns, with drooping rosebuds in her small hands. The spiritual and the material had not yet been separated in my comprehension, and I felt no lack in the beautiful clay. But seeing the grief of the household, it occurred to me that God could raise my sister to life just as he did the ruler's daughter. Going away by myself I prayed with the utmost confidence that she might live again. I had not a doubt that my petition would be granted; but I stole back through the darkened hall with my heart full of exultation at the thought of taking her to my mother. My disappointment was great, but I persisted in my prayers up to the very hour when her face was shut from our sight, and for years I was haunted by a vague belief that if they had looked once more, when the little coffin stood under the great pines in the dreary burying ground, they would have found her wakened out of sleep.

To this hour I retain the vivid impressions of those days; the doubt and perplexity that took possession of me, unsolved, because never expressed to any one, the gradual exchange of confidence in my Father for fear of my Judge, as I was impressed with the fact that I was a wicked child whose prayers were not answered, because I ought to be a Christian and was not, and, in fact, had not the first rational idea how to be. Is there not something wrong at least in our methods of holy living when our children, who would come to us freely with any other perplexities, carry about in silence all the doubts and questions of their spiritual life? Teach them to talk to you and to God. Let the children lead in prayer, and ask for what they want in their own way, and let the great truths of Christianity be discussed at the table and at the family altar with no more reserve, and with no more unnatural solemnity than you use in speaking of the wonders of the natural world. If our children could be trained to such a sweet, healthy, all-pervading religion, we should not so frequently be compelled to meet the spectacle of men who would speak clearly and pointedly to any secular question, attempting to lead the thought to others in vague, unmeaning phrases, and petitions that are prompted by no sense of need or

expectation of receiving. And then to call it a *cross*, and glory in having borne it! My brethren, bear your crosses when Christ gives them to you, but nowhere in the Bible is prayer recognized as a cross, and nowhere on earth would it be so thought of if we were content to pray as Christ taught us, in simple words, for actual wants. If you can so enter into sympathy with others that seeing their common wants you can tell them to a common Father, that is leading in prayer. If on your own soul rests the burden of so intense a longing that its expression will draw all hearts to plead with you, that is leading in prayer. Otherwise you pray alone, whether at the family altar or in the public assembly, and might ponder with profit upon a good brother's comment on a prayer-meeting in Dublin, at a special time of refreshing: "*Did ye mind how the Lord gave most of us grace to hold our tongues?*"

MYSTERIES IN THE BIBLE.

BY PROF. EDWARD OLNEY, LL. D., OF MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY.

WHY are there so many things in the Bible which we can not understand? Why, if God has attempted to make a revelation to us, has he not made it so clear that we can not mistake about it? It will be observed that these two questions are not identical, although they are equally troublesome to many candid young minds; and probably there is usually no discrimination made between them, or between these and several other forms in which the same difficulty presents itself. Many find the Bible an unsatisfactory book to them, because they can not fully comprehend it all. It teaches many things positively which they can not reconcile with each other — many things the possibility of which they can not see.

In respect to these "deep things of God," as the Fathers called them, the Gospel of John, which we are now studying, is specially characterized. That this book was not written by a young man, nor by a superficial and unthoughtful man, nor by any but a man of long and profound Christian experience, is fully evident on the face of it. How that mystery of mysteries, "God manifest in the flesh," is made to stand out in its very introduction. Indeed it seems almost as if the evangelist was purposely writing divine riddles, when he says, "The WORD was *with* God," (a *distinct* personality,) and immediately adds, "The WORD *was* God, (absolute identity.) The mystery of regeneration—how unequivocally it is put. Nicodemus could not see *how* it could be,—no man can understand *how* it can be. This is one of the "heavenly things" to comprehend which one needs to ascend into heaven — penetrate the counsels of Jehovah; although the *earthly* side is patent to all — the effects of regeneration no candid observer can deny. Again, the death of Christ the only cure for sin — the great stumbling block to the Jews, foolishness to the Greek, and the rock at which unbelief has always taken offense — how John brings it forward. Jesus is the antitype of the brazen serpent; he is the Water of Life, the Bread of Life. The sovereignty of God in electing sinners to salvation is scarcely more squarely put, or more persistently urged, by Paul himself than by John in this Gospel. "No man can come unto me except the Father draw him;" "of all that the Father hath given me;" and even the very figure of being "born from above" implies the sovereign agency of the Spirit in this work. But why enumerate when each page is freighted with these things! Nor is it that they are difficult to find, but rather that they are so

palpable, that teachers and students of the Bible need help in regard to them. It is my purpose to call attention to three undeniable facts in regard to this class of teachings as found in the Bible, which facts, it seems to me, go much further than to relieve the embarrassment which these profound things are apt to produce even so far as to make us rejoice that they are in the Bible inasmuch as they are one of its most conspicuous seals of divinity.

1. *These unfathomable, incomprehensible teachings are essential. If the Bible did not contain such things it would be utterly impossible for any one to believe in its divine authenticity.* How palpably is this demonstrated by the fact that man never attempts to make a book for which he is to claim divine authority, without filling it with the incomprehensible. No religious book is known but what has this characteristic. It is a deep seated instinct of our nature which demands it. Moreover, our reason, as well as our human instinct, demands the same thing. Bring me a watch, and I examine it, determining the structure and function of every part. I find no mystery about it. However much I may admire the genius which contrived it, and the skill which constructed it, I say it is of man—it is artificial. Man can comprehend it—man made it. But bring me the tiniest blade of grass, and the labor of years only convinces me that I can not unravel the intricacies of its structure, can only name the most distinctive thing I find about it (life); am perfectly at loss when I attempt to investigate its functional laws, and can not even guess at the unerring principle which paints its skin. I unhesitatingly say "It is natural," God—not man—made. There is no intervention even of the human between the divine and the product. It is wholly of God. Thus if you come to me with a book whose statements I can fathom, and can verify or contradict, however much I may admire it, I can not believe it to be divine. A book which is from God must reveal facts which man could not discover—must contain teachings the reasons for which man can not fathom.

2. *A book which is designed to save men from sin must be a book which a man can disbelieve.* Where there is no choice there is no virtue. There is no moral quality developed or required in believing the demonstration of a mathematical proposition. If truth is to be presented to man in such a form as to save him from sin, it must be in such a form as demands of him in every way a relinquishing of sin. It must demand this in order to its first reception, and it must be so communicated as to develop this at every stage of growth in its knowledge. How Jesus reiterated this principle in his acts and in his teachings. How readily could he have wrought miracles which would have confounded and silenced the Jews. Aye, Satan demanded what infidelity has ever since been demanding, that, if Jesus was the Son of God he should cast himself headlong from the pinnacle of the temple into the rocky vale below, and thus in the presence of all the people demonstrate that he had superhuman power. But Jesus wrought no *such* miracles. Even the miracle of his resurrection must be such that malice could gainsay it. Why, the faith begotten of such wonder-working is not necessarily any better than the faith of devils—there is no *moral* quality in it. No demon ever questioned the reality of Christ's miracles. But these gracious wonders were touchstones of saving trust. The susceptible heart would exclaim: "My Lord, and my God!" on the same evidence at which the rulers would cry: "Nay, but he deceiveth the people. Away with him; crucify him, crucify him." Again, in his teachings Christ says: "If ye will do the *work* ye shall know the *doctrine*." Even though by study one may come to perceive the truth of Christ's teachings, he is not necessarily the better for it. Saving faith is of the heart, not of the head. With how little speculative knowledge has many a sin-sick soul

cried out, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," and entered into life; while another has by searching been profoundly convinced of the truth of the gospel, and perished in his sin.

3. This peculiarity of God's Word which we are considering is exactly a parallel with what we find in his works, and demonstrates their common origin. The doctrine of the Trinity is no more incomprehensible—no more self-contradictory, if you will—than the doctrine of the union into one being of two natures so radically different as man's physical and spiritual natures. In the beginning the soul is *with* man, the soul is *in* man, the soul *is* man. Of course I do not present this as in any way explanatory of the doctrine of the Trinity. I present it simply to say that both the doctrine of the Trinity and the fact of the union of the soul and body into one being are utterly incomprehensible, and yet none the less true. If the incomprehensibility does not militate against the fact in one case, it does not invalidate Scripture teaching in the other. The incomprehensibility has nothing to do with establishing or overthrowing the fact in either case; the truth has to be established on entirely different foundations. Nay, I will go further. To an intelligence which had no antecedent knowledge of either, I doubt not that a statement of the dual nature of man would seem far more absurd than the statement of the triune nature of God. In the former case the natures, so far as we can comprehend them, are absolutely and radically dissimilar; while in the latter inspiration labors to tell us of their essential unity in essence and attributes.

Once more, infidelity never ceases to ring the changes on the assertion that the doctrine of the future and eternal punishment of the wicked, so clearly and unequivocally taught in the Scriptures, is irreconcilably at variance with God's character, as a God of love. But why should the teaching that in the future state a very large part of the human race will be saved from sin and dwell forever in bliss, while the remainder will abide forever under the consequences of unrepented, and hence unforgiven sin, be thought more inconsistent with God's character than the fact that *all* the race abide through all time in suffering here? The penitent and the incorrigibly hardened are here alike in a vale of tears; yea, the purest and noblest of all, the Immaculate himself, was pre-eminently "A man of sorrows." "*His* visage was *more* marred than the *sons of men*."

THE HATE OF THE WORLD.

BY REV. E. L. HURD, D. D.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.
If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.—John 15: 18, 19.

IT is plain that Christ in these words foretold a hatred of the world toward his disciples, or toward himself, which has been a very large element in the historical experience of the church. It is equally apparent that the time would come if Christianity should triumph, when this hatred would be overcome and would entirely disappear. Does this hate now exist? Does it exist intensely as in past times? Where and how does it exist, and how is it manifested?

It is clear that this hate of the world was to be overcome by the most emollient and persuasive influences, and even at its very seat and citadel, the heart of

man; though there was to be here a mighty transforming work of Divine power called regeneration, yet this was to consist with what was consciously the most tender persuasive influences. The hate of the world would not be crushed out by some tyrant's resistless forces, but by all those persuasive influences which come forth from love. It would result from this, that as Christ said, the kingdom "cometh not with observation;" you can not say, "Lo, here," or "Lo, there." You can not point to some visible line running through mankind and say love has conquered all on this side, and hate has possession of all on that side. You can point to centers where malignant hate is obviously still prominent, and centers where love has gained a more or less controlling influence.

Miss Hancock has taught Indian children now more than forty years, with very little evidence of success in civilizing them, with only occasional signs of the implanting of the Christian hope in some dark heart in the wigwam. Still, when I saw her and addressed her sixty black-haired Indian boys in the gloomy block-house a mile from the nearest tepee, and two miles from the only three white families allowed in the tribe, the agent, the storekeeper, and the miller, she was as patiently, as lovingly teaching these boys as when, in the bloom of her youth, she first went alone in the forests to teach their grown up brothers and some of their fathers and mothers. Last month there was a farewell reception given to two young ladies who have given their lives to similar mission work in Persia. It will not be questioned, I think that these instances are representative, and show that love has gained a footing and influence in some quarters, in the line of Christianity and the church. It would not be difficult to find representative illustrations of the fact that hate has still its home and its throne upon earth.

But Christ spoke of a hate shown toward him, and which would be displayed toward his followers, toward Christianity and the church. This hate of the world toward Christ and Christianity! What a change has occurred since Christ uttered those words! Then none, Jew or Gentile, knew and appreciated Christ as he really was, or his teachings. He knew that the whole world, political, literary, social, religious, would be arrayed against his gospel and church as soon as they were sufficiently proclaimed, just as Jew and Gentile united to condemn himself. And this was realized in apostolic times, and afterward, the world uniting to condemn and persecute Christians. But since that time, oratory of all grades has proclaimed Christ; poetry has eulogized Christ, and with music has celebrated Christian thoughts and feelings; art has illustrated Christian ideas; literature has become tinged with Christianity; social life has become modified by it; and the ruling governments of the world acknowledge at length its sway. There is now no word which can be spoken which represents throughout the highest civilization of the world, at the present day, so popular an idea as the word Christianity, unless it be, possibly, the word "wealth." Even among skeptical minds and critics of Christianity there is an abounding eulogy of Christianity and of Christian ideas. Now that Christianity walks over so much of the best of the earth in the "silver-slippers," has she completely conquered and banished the world's hate? Rather, I would say, she has in part disarmed that hate. Some of her excellencies have won a place in the world's esteem and praise. Much of the external opposition of the world has yielded. But that which when fully aroused and matured is hatred may be found in the heart of men in every grade of development, from mere indifference up through every stage of opposition to fierce hatred.

Indifference finds no note in Christianity to which it responds, but when a note of opposition is struck it finds itself attuned to that, and responds, and henceforth its tones become more or less

positive in opposition. We can see that opposition to Christianity exists in the heart of the world from the eagerness with which each new and half developed idea is seized upon as a missile to hurl at Christianity. Christianity is not unfriendly to new ideas. If it were proved that the periods of the formative processes in creation were millions of ages, Christian scholars would have no regret. They desire that it *should be proved* that we come from monads through monkeys to our present stature of men, if that be the truth. The diversion of pelting Christianity with these clubs only serves to show that men have the disposition to club. It shows that opposition to Christ and his claims still exists. But we shall always find this opposition most manifest where Christianity comes with its claims to our personal hearts. When it says you must give up your personal sin and turn toward Christ as your personal Saviour, if you would cease to be a lost man, it is at once a test of the existence of this opposition. "Repent" has been a word which has proved the world's hate, and in our own day as well. "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

THE CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

BY REV. LEWELLYN PRATT.

WE call it the Sunday-school; but that name has lost much of its applicability now that the service is not designed to furnish a means of educating those who can not attend school during the week. Methods of work depend so much upon the theories upon which they are based that these latter need constant revision and reconstruction. The name Sunday-school emphasizes the theory that this service is primarily for education. This suggests the methods in vogue in day schools and brings in their appliances — the ringing of bells, the discipline, the machinery. There is simply the transference of school management from the school-house to the church. Under this system there may be good order, there may be the perfection of drill, such as may be found in the military schools. Sunday-school martinets may enforce their authority by demerit marks and fines. But the teachers are sought because of their ability to hold a class; or, at best, for their ability to instruct the scholars in anything — science, art, law, history, geography — without much regard to their devotion. The work is performed in a perfunctory manner, and results are looked for in that which is outward and palpable — the regularity of attendance and the perfection of drill in conduct and in recitation. The children, of course, weary of this as they grow older, and desire to escape from it, as from other childish things. And under this theory the "children's service" constantly suffers by comparison; for as a means of discipline and of education it does not rank as high as the day school, with its graded system, its apparatus, its liberal expenditures, and its well-trained teachers. I do not mean to say that much, very much may not be learned from the management of the public schools; but that these are not to be the models.

Another theory which is quite common is that of entertainment. Above all else, the scholars must be interested. With this come in the foolery of the Sunday-school — theatrical recitations, comic songs, cheap dramas, white dresses with blue sashes, class banners, and tableaux; for must not the children be entertained and amused? We are frequently reminded of the story of one of our most popular humorists, who, being called upon by the superintendent to address the school, entertained the children with a comic story, told in his drollest way. When remonstrated with for telling such a story to a Sunday-school, he justified himself by asking:

"Didn't the children laugh?" and then added: "I thought that was what Sunday-school addresses were for." Under the theory he was correct. It is precisely what the addresses and the whole conduct of the school are for—to entertain and amuse; and, just as in other sensuous methods, new shows, new stimulants, new sensations must be constantly devised. But, as in these other sensuous methods, the stream rises no higher than the fountain. Those who are attracted by the foolery remain foolish; those who are won by guile do not become guileless. Let the children be encouraged to come with all enthusiasm and with loud hosannas to worship and praise the Son of David; but let us be careful that they worship him and be stirred with enthusiasm toward him, and not toward the animal on which he rode up to Jerusalem.

The true idea of the Sunday-school, as we conceive it, is worship. So long as the principle object is to attract, so long will extraneous methods be employed, and the Sunday-school that gives the most candies and chromos will draw the best and do the most harm. If, however, the Sunday-school is made the home of good and pure influences; if the teachers and scholars meet in a cheerful way to worship God by praise and prayer, by study of God's Word and by offerings; if all that is uplifting and inspiring is brought to bear in methods adapted to children; if the place is felt to be different from other places, different motives are appealed to, and emulation and strife, amusement and sensual gratification are forgotten, while the spiritual desires, the higher natures are cultivated and the soul is lifted up in communion with God, just as devoted mothers know how to lift up the souls of very little children —then there is the commendation of the consciences of men that what is done is fitting and right, the work is felt to be genuine, and the children as they grow older respect the place; and find it just as well adapted to their growing wants as before. It is well known that the household that has been full of show and the constant straining for effect cultivates the taste for more show and dazzle; and that those trained in this way seek their entertainment afterward where it is furnished in its most alluring forms. So children trained in a Sunday-school where the theory is entertainment soon leave it. There is a sense of dignity as they grow older that revolts from such methods; or there is a craving gendered by these very methods which can not be satisfied with the childish amusements there afforded, and the mock theatricals must be exchanged for the real theatricals. We all know that class of Hessians or mercenaries in the Sunday-school army who go from school to school for the prizes, shows, skates, sleds, dolls, etc. How many out of that corps were ever converted and brought into the church? We must have our work true work, have the right aim or we misuse our opportunities, and the children soon find it out.

This is not a plea for dullness in the Sunday-school nor for awful solemnity. Let there be the deepest interest, let the teacher study to interest his class and the superintendent the whole school; but let this be a means to an end, not the end. Let there be instruction. No teacher is fit to lead a class who does not impart to them from full preparation. Let the methods found successful in day schools be studied and employed; but let these be helps to the work, not substitutes for it. The day school does not train directly for the church, neither do circuses and theaters, and we need not make either of these the model. The Sunday-school has precisely the same end as the services of the sanctuary—to bring souls into communion with God. These two need to be welded together—the sanctuary and the Sunday-school. The latter is not to be regarded as a separate institution; but as the second service of the church, adapted to the children, and its methods should be in harmony with that idea.

It may be helpful to adopt an order of service which shall embody this idea of

worship more fully than the impromptu method too often employed by the superintendent. I have known such an order as the following to be used with great benefit: At the appointed hour, without announcement, any more than the minister would make from his pulpit, the superintendent reads in a clear voice, from a printed card, which all the teachers and scholars have, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The school responds, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." In like manner all the Beatitudes are repeated. Then all rise, without any command from the superintendent, and, without any signal except the striking of a chord upon the piano, and chant: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." All remain standing and repeat the Apostles' Creed. Then, all being seated, a hymn is sung. That is followed by the reading of the day's lesson, superintendent and school reading verses alternately. Without announcement, except the chord given as before, all join and sing one verse as a prayer:

"Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others thou art smiling,
Do not pass me by."

This is followed by prayer, and that by singing another hymn. Then comes, in the place of the sermon, the lesson study—each teacher as the preacher of the day for his or her class taking the lesson from Scripture and expounding it in such way as seems best fitted to bring out its teachings, and then enforcing them by questions and personal application upon heart and conscience. The space of thirty-five minutes is allowed for this—about the same time as for the sermon in the church. The bell announces when the various class pastors are to bring their instructions to a close. A hymn is sung, the superintendent gives his notices, enforces one or two thoughts from the lesson, gives directions for future meetings; but all briefly, as would the minister make announcements from the pulpit. Another hymn is sung, and then the concluding exercises follow. All rise, and the superintendent, reading from the card, pronounces: "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." And the whole school responds: "To him be glory, both now and forever." Then the Doxology, "Praise God," etc., is sung; and last the Lord's Prayer is repeated by all.

The advantages found in actual trial are: the enlisting, from the beginning to the close, of the attention of all; the freedom from all pauses, to be filled up by the superintendent calling to order or attempting to occupy the time; the worshipful attitute and spirit which pervade and carry all along; the harmony with the church service, making this eminently the children's church. The whole service, including the lesson study, occupies a little over an hour. No interruption is allowed for collecting or distributing library books, any more than it would be in the church. These are collected as the children come in before the service and are distributed after the service.

"Call a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children." —*Independent.*

THE CHAUTAUQUA ASSEMBLY.

BY REV. GEORGE A. PELTZ.

THE second session of the Chautauqua Sunday School Assembly has been held. It has been abundantly reported, but an impartial survey of its principal features may be useful.

The place of meeting is certainly excellent. Fair Point, for so the exact location is designated, is a beautiful headland extending into Chautauqua Lake, which is situated in Chautauqua

county, New York. The lake is fourteen hundred feet above the sea, and seven hundred feet above Lake Erie, which is but a few miles distant — its waters washing the western margin of Chautauqua county. At this elevation, and between these two sheets of water, cool weather even in summer is a certainty. Fair Point is covered with a noble forest of beech and oak, its ground rising gently from the water, and drying rapidly after a rain. The surrounding scenery is superb, and access to the outside world is readily had by steamboats connecting with the Lake Shore, and with the Erie railroads.

The existing accommodations are not equal to those at Ocean Grove, Martha's Vineyard, Round Lake, or some other older and more fashionable resorts. At this some have been disappointed. They have come expecting all the comforts of a first-class watering place, but failing to find them, like one of old they "turned and went away in a rage." Others quite as well accustomed to home comforts viewed the case more reasonably, and were happy. A year ago the entire place resembled a mushroom city upon the frontier. This year we find more cottages, better cottages, an occasional board walk, fences, flowers, decorations, paint, and other tokens of advance. A good hotel, which is much needed, is promised for next year. The large floating population of this Sunday-school city had a rough time on the crowded days. The dining hall is a poor affair, badly located, and by no means well kept. The dining halls of Martha's Vineyard might be studied to advantage by the Chautauqua management.

The attendance was grand. Many of our states were represented, as also several of the Canadian provinces. All grades of Sunday-school people were there, from pastors to infant-class scholars, and at some time during the session nearly all the acknowledged leaders in Sunday-school work put in an appearance. From first to last the two hundred and fifty cottages and one hundred and fifty tents were about full. Sometimes they were packed, and at the end they were so overflowed that the meeting tents were extemporized into dormitories. The standard attendance was about four thousand. The transient visitors were about one thousand per day, and at the time of President Grant's visit about fifteen thousand persons were on the ground. Some of these attendants were permanent residents on the ground, some were pleasure seekers, but the bulk were workers who came to learn.

The organization and management of those who came to learn was under the care of Dr. Vincent. He does everything in a masterly way, but this year's work at Chautauqua is his masterpiece. The peal of bells located at the point rang out their merry monitions with the regularity of clock work, summoning to rise, to assemble for morning prayers, to breakfast, to the general working session at the stand, to the sectional working sessions in the tents, to the general address at the stand, and so on, and on, through the day's duties, until they pealed forth their ten o'clock signal for silence and for sleep. To all these calls prompt obedience was rendered. Drenching rains did not dampen the ardor with which the workers flocked to the place of prayer or of instruction. The grip of this work on the hearts of these men and women was wonderfully illustrated in their unswerving devotion to the duties of each hour.

Too much praise can not be awarded Mr. Lewis Miller, Rev. Mr. Warren, and Rev. Dr. Wyeth, for the very efficient management of their respective departments. In fact it would be hard to tell what could have been better done, in view of the comparatively unfinished state of affairs upon this ground.

The organization of a Chautauqua Alumni Association by those who received diplomas last year was a noteworthy act. It speaks of the permanent maintenance of a high standard among those who teach and toil in Sunday-school. Large numbers aspiring to

fellowship with the Alumni entered the competitive examination at the close. How many of them secured the honor is yet to be learned.

Whether assemblies of this kind shall be multiplied, or whether Chautauqua shall be our Mecca, remains to be seen. The catholicity of this affair is abundant to include us all. To rival it would be difficult; to surpass it, impossible. And yet, a multiplication of such efforts would doubtless diffuse culture more widely. However this may result, Chautauqua will probably remain in fact, as in history it must remain, the pioneer and the model Sunday School Assembly.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES OF SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

LESSON XL.—OCT. 3, 1875.—JESUS LIFTED UP.

SCRIPTURE.—John **12:23-33.** Commit **24-26, 32**; Primary Verse, **32.**

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.
24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.
26 If any man serve me let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.
27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.
29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.
30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.
31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.
32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—JOHN 12:32.

TOPIC.—LIFE FROM DEATH.

HOME READINGS.

M. 1 Cor. 15:35-55......"Quickened" only by Death.
T. 1 Cor. 15:12-26.....Resurrection from the Dead.
W. John 5:19-29.....All in graves shall come forth.
Th. 1 Thess. 4:1-18.....Awaked from Sleep.
F. 2 Cor. 5:1-21.....An Earthly House—a Building of God.
S. 1 Pet. 1:3-21.....Born to an Inheritance Incorruptible.
S. Phil. 3:7-21.....Changed into "His glorious body."

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE GLORY OF THE SON.—Who had come desiring to see Jesus? 21, 22. To whom, then, was Jesus talking at this time? What hour is referred to in verse 23? How was the "Son of man" to be glorified? 1st. As "a corn of wheat" is glorified. 24. How is that? 2d. By a voice. 28. 3d. By what, as shown in verse 33? By what in chapter 17:5, 10? What is the result if a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die? 24. How is that like the death of Christ? Read the first Home Reading and then tell what similarity between the death of a grain of wheat and the death of a Christian? Is there any such beautiful hope for the unrepentant sinner? 25. What is meant by *He that loveth his life—he that hateth his life?* Look up the similar spassage and read the connections in each case. Matt. 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33.

THE GLORY OF HIS DISCIPLES.—23, 24. How was it to be obtained? 26. See, also, verse 25. When is this "honor" to be received—in this life or the next? 26; 17:24. What do you think the glory will be? 17:22; 2 Cor. 3:18. See especially Luke 22:30; Rev. 3:21. We are to "follow" Christ in order thus to be honored? Read 13:1-17 and Matt. 23:11-13 for light as to what that means.

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.—By what manifestation did he glorify himself and the Son also? 28. What did the people think the voice was? 29. For whose sake did it come? 30. In what other way is the Father to be glorified? 31, 32. How can *you* glorify him? 1 Pet. 4:14.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE GLORY OF THE SON.—The discourse which forms the subject of the present lesson was prompted by the presence of an unusual audience. Some Greeks had desired to see Christ, and, after some consultation between Andrew and Philip, had been brought into his presence. They were probably Jewish proselytes, partaking with the Jews of the hope of a coming, or, it may be, a present Messiah. It is to them that Jesus "answers," and, as his mission to the Gentiles does not really begin until after his death and resurrection, their coming to him inevitably suggests, and is premonitory of, his approaching doom. Stier most strikingly says concerning them: "These men from the West at the end of the life of Jesus set forth the same as the Magi from the East at its beginning; but they came to the *Cross* of the King as those to his *cradle*." His discourse, however, is not wholly for them. The teachers who study this are aware how difficult it was to wrest away the hope that the disciples had in an earthly kingdom of unparalleled glory. That hope had just been made stronger and more tenacious by Christ's undisputed and triumphal entry into Jerusalem, saluted as "The king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." It was important, therefore, that they should be prepared for the failure of their expectations, and that they should learn that his glory was to come through humiliation instead of exaltation—through shame instead of honor—through a coronation of thorns instead of a kingly crown. Imagination can not conceive of any more beautiful or striking way of showing that his death was to be his real triumph, and the cross was to be his real crown, than his comparison of his death to that of a "corn of wheat" which if it "fall into the ground and die it bringeth forth much fruit."

The hour. See 13: 1; 17: 1. *The Son of man.* It was as the "Son of man" that he was to be glorified. Supposed to be only a man, now it was to be shown that he was what he claimed to be—the Son of God. Glorified—how? By victory over the grave—by the greater fruitage referred to in verse 24—by the release from all limitations of his humanity to boundless activity through the Spirit—by his personal exaltation (33)—by the testimony of the Spirit (16: 14)—by finishing his work (17: 4)—by receiving again the glory of the Father (17: 5)—by the life and praises of his followers (17: 10)—by his exaltation in the sight of all (Phil. 2: 9–11)—by the present witness of the Father in the voice that came from heaven, saying: "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again"—by his drawing all nations unto his Father. Is. 55: 5.

Except a corn of wheat, etc. Introduced by that emphatic "*Verily, verily*"—an emphasis needed especially now that their ambitious hopes had been stimulated by that triumphal entry into the city. There is no glory in unplanted seed. Its glory is in its own death and hundred-fold resurrection in waving harvest-fields. So Christ, had he not died, would have "abided alone" with the Father. His death was necessary to our life—"Christ the first-fruits of them that slept; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." 1 Cor. 15: 20, 21. The comparison of the seed sown, dying, springing, and bearing much fruit is applicable only to Christ himself. We are "the fruit" only, and of ourselves without life. John 6: 53. In relation to those who having believed "hath eternal life," Paul uses the same comparison, separated, however, from the idea of fruit-bearing results. "That," he says, "which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (Do not fail to read *all* that Paul says about it. 1 Cor. 15.) Both comparisons suggest the idea that death, after all, is death in appearance only. The seed "dies"—that is, its outer covering

falls off in order to let the real life that is within it have a chance to grow. That is not touched in any way by the death of the seed, and indeed, would not be manifest but for it. And so, sooner or later, every Christian man will realize that death is but the entrance into larger life—"is swallowed up in victory."

Bringeth forth much fruit. Compared with what was then being borne. Christ always referred to the time after his death as being that of the greatest ingathering. So he told his disciples that it was "expedient" for them that he should go away in order that the "Comforter" might come. 16: 7–13; see, also, 14: 16, 17, 26. At the feast of Pentecost Paul gave as a reason for the wonderful harvest that was gathered there: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." Acts 2: 33. During his life he fed thousands at a meal; after his death thousands were converted by a single sermon.

THE GLORY OF HIS DISCIPLES.–25, 26. That comes by imitating him. As his glory was to come through his death and not through his elevation to an earthly throne, so theirs was to be gained not through the preservation of their lives and their exaltation to earthly honors, but by humility, self-denial, and perhaps even the loss of life. The 25th verse is a hint to them not to covet the glories of this world or they may lose the more exceeding glories of the other—not to set their hearts upon the things of this life or they may lose life eternal. To *us* it is that and something more. All self-seeking is really self-losing. He who is perpetually studying how to secure joy for himself never has joy. Pleasure, says the proverb, ever flies before him who pursues her. He that is ever selfishly thinking of himself may acquire fame or fortune—may seem to succeed, but will really fail. Matt. 16: 26. Even in the Christian life, he who is constantly thinking of peace and rest does not have their comforting presence nearly so much as he who, forgetful of himself, seeks only to know his duty and to do it. See, for parallel and illustrative passages, Matt. 10: 39; 16: 25; Mark 8: 35; Luke 9: 24; 17: 33. In his exhortation to humility he rebuked this same idea of self-seeking. He instructed them: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant," and enforced his precept by his example in washing their feet. Humility! Humility! was his great watchword. And Paul took it up and repeated his lessons upon it again and again, until finally he wrote himself down as "the least of the apostles," and "less than least of all the saints." 1 Cor. 15: 9; Eph. 3: 8.

Where I am. Not where he then was, of course, but where he was to be—at the right hand of the Father. 14: 3; 17: 24; 1 Thess. 4: 17. The conditions: *Serve—follow.* And then to serve and follow meant a service of hardships and a following unto death. *Will my Father honor.* Honor them *here* by his presence, by giving them new hearts, by helping them to triumph over temptations and difficulties, by receiving them as Sons of God, by the respect in which they will be held of men; *hereafter:* "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3: 21. We are "joint-heirs with Christ," and shall be honored even as he is honored. 17: 22. But our greatest glory and honor will be that we shall be changed into the likeness of *himself:* "Behold now are we the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 18; see, also, especially, Rom. 8: 17, 18.

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.—27–33. Identical with the glory of the Son—to be manifest by the same means. To be shown first in the submission of the Son to his coming cruel death—a death into whose horrors he was even now

entering. His soul already was "troubled" because of it. What it was that caused this percursory woe and the agony of Gethsemane evidently was not the approaching torture of the cross. Many a man, many a timid maiden even, has unflinchingly met a death as terrible. It was only that in himself he bore the woes of a guilty world, and in that "cup" was the concentrated bitterness of sin, rendered still more bitter by the ingratitude of those he came to save, that could account for such grief beyond utterance, and such anguish of soul. Is. 53:4. Once more before that supreme hour of agony in the garden is his soul thus "troubled," and then it was because of the fact that Judas was to betray him. 13:21. *For this cause*, etc. There are two ways of reading this: *First*, just as it is punctuated, making "Father save me from this hour" a prayer; *second*, by some an interrogation point is put after "hour," making of that a question. The authority for the change does not seem very clear, and is somewhat questionable, while, as a prayer, it is a very echo of the one uttered in Gethsemane. Remarkable submission! It was for *this cause* he came. His atoning death was the cause of his manger birth.

The voice. This is now the third time of an attestation of Christ's divinity by a voice from heaven. 1.—At his baptism. Matt. 3:17. 2.—At his transfiguration. Luke 9:35. And it was not uttered, in either case probably, for his sake, but for the sake of those who stood about. So it was that he prayed aloud at the raising of Lazarus. 11:42. And some said it thundered, and some that an angel spake to him. Acts 9:7. All heard something, but with what different ears! The voice of God was heard, but its meaning was understood only by the anointed few. In these later times is the same want of perception observable. Christians see in the things that happen, a divine, overruling Providence; unbelievers see only natural causes and their effects. Christians pray for the help, the guidance, the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and they obtain their request; but unbelievers hear no divine voice in the soul, and account for the results by the "reflex influence" of prayer upon those who offer it. Their eyes are blinded and their ears are stopped. To them the most sublime sights and sounds are only commonplace utterances of nature and never the voice of God.

Further was the Father to be glorified by "the judgment of this world," and the casting out of its prince. The judgment pronounced upon Christ was not a judgment upon him so much as it was upon those who convicted him. Those who would not convict Tweed wrote themselves down as guilty men. Those who, despite the evidence, would convict an innocent man declare themselves worthy of punishment. To Christ is committed the judgment of this world. 5:22; Acts 17:30, 31; Rom. 2:16; 2 Cor. 5:10. For before him every knee must bow and every tongue confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." The one that was tried shall be the judge, and he that was condemned shall be the one to pass sentence. *The prince.* How unmistakably the Scriptures teach the existence of this personal evil being. It was the devil that tempted Christ. Luke 4:6. It was Paul's word of comfort to the Romans that "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Rom. 16:20. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness in this world! Eph. 6:12. It is "the god of this world" that hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not." 2 Cor. 4:3, 4. Through his own death was Christ to destroy him that had the power of death. Heb. 2:14. And his disciples, afflicted by this enemy of all good with doubts and with temptations, with evil suggestions and excitations of evil passions, are also to overcome him—*"by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.* Rev. 12:11. *And I, if I be lifted up*, etc. Perfectness of the victory. *All men.* Jews and Greeks only were

before him; hence the emphasis upon "all men"—not every man, but men from all nations. See Is. 55: 5. *Draw.* Will attract—not compel. Men's hearts will be melted by the exhibition of Christ on the cross. Whenever Christ is lifted up, how surely conversions follow! How barren are the results when he is not lifted up, where men exalt means, methoths, eloquence, self, above the cross and its burden. Higher and higher, then, is he to be lifted up; and brighter and brighter will this radiant cross shine, until its glory shall compass the world and all shall look and say: "Surely this is the Son of God."

Lesson Gleanings.

1.—The height that we have to climb is a *descent* into the valley of humility. "Climbing up Zion's Hill" is a misconception. Down—down—down was always the direction that Christ pointed out to his followers. Christian graces, like flowers, do not grow on rugged heights, but in lowly valleys. The deepest valley of humiliation is the nearest heaven. Ps. 34: 18; 138: 6; Is. 57: 15; Matt. 5: 3-5; Eph. 4: 1, 2; Col. 3: 12; Jas. 4: 6, 10; 1 Pet. 5: 5.

2.—It should never be forgotten that through his disciples is the Saviour to be glorified. If they walk worthy of their profession then will they be an honor to the Saviour; if not, then will they be an occasion of grief and reproach. Living epistles are they, known and read of all men. John 17: 10; 2 Cor. 8: 23; Eph. 4: 1; Phil. 1: 20, 27; Col. 1: 10; 1 Thess. 2: 12; 2 Thess. 1: 10.

3.—We can not be too often reminded that we may obtain the things of this life at the expense, if not at the entire loss of the other. We should be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." We are not to be so wholly devoted to business as to lose fervency of spirit or delegate the work of serving the Lord to others. The Christian may make a bad bargain as well as the sinner. Matt. 13: 22; Luke 12: 15; 21: 34; Rom. 12: 2; Gal. 1: 4; 1 Tim. 6: 9, 10, 17; 2 Tim. 4: 10.

4.—To the impenitent the voice of God is as terrible as thunder. To the believer it is as sweet as the voice of an angel. The very voice that shall summon the glad hosts of the redeemed, will fall like the knell of doom on the ears of the guilty and unforgiven. Luke 23: 30; Rev. 6: 16; 9: 6; 1 Thess. 4: 16-18.

5.—By the death of the Saviour how changed has death become! No longer is it a descent into a great horror of darkness, but a gate opening into a life of glory unspeakable. To the Christian the grave is robbed of all its terrors. 1 Cor. 2: 9; 15: 45, 55; 2 Cor. 5: 4; 2 Tim. 1: 10; Heb. 2: 14, 15; Rev. 1: 18.

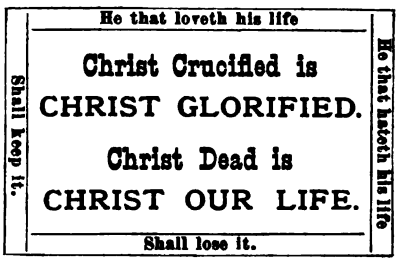
HYMN.

Hear ye the glad Good News from heaven?
Life to the death-doomed race is given!
Christ on the cross for you and me
Purchased a pardon full and free.

Chorus:—

He that believeth, he that believeth,
He that believeth hath everlasting life;
He that believeth hath everlasting life.

BLACKBOARD.



THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The people loved Jesus. It was only the rulers that wanted to kill him. When he came into the city riding on an ass, the people strewed palm branches in his path and cried out: "Hosanna to the Son of David." Even the little children took up the cry and made the temple ring with it. There were some Greeks who had seen this triumphal entry or in some way had heard of Jesus and they wanted to see him. It looked as if Jesus was going to be a great king. But he did not come to be a king, and he told them so. He told them that his glory was to come through a shameful death—not through mounting on a throne. Then he showed them how this could be. (Take a grain of corn as an object lesson.) If this seed is planted, after awhile it dies. But is that the last of it? No, out of it comes two little leaves, and they push up through the ground and become a stalk, and on the stalk there are what? A good many kernels of corn can come from just this one seed. But if I were to put it very carefully away in my drawer, what good would it do? If its life were preserved it would be of no use. By dying life comes out of it. And so with Christ. He died and was buried, but the tomb could not contain him. Like a seed that breaks its covering, he rent the grave in which he lay and ascended to a new life. And because of his death we live. Each kernel of corn, as we have seen, if it is planted, bears much fruit. Well, we are the "fruit" that Christ has borne on account of his death. His death has made it possible for our souls to live.

2.—*Selfishness.* When are we the most happy? When we keep all our good things, or when we share them with others? There never was a more discontented boy than one who never "divides" with any body. He eats all his apple, but he does not have half so much pleasure as one who divides his with his hungry playfellow. He eats it all that he may be happy, but in doing so he loses his happiness. The one who gives part of his away is much more happy of the two. Now we are prepared to understand verse 25. (Read it.) He who loves this life—is always thinking of self, self, self, will lose the other. He who hates this life—hates selfishness, meanness of all kinds, is self-denying, will keep the other. (Comment on "what shall it profit a man," etc.)

3.—*The voice.* What different people thought it was. What shall God's voice be to us?—as thunder or as the voice of an angel? The prince of the world cast out—from our hearts. Christ died that he might rule in our hearts and cast out the evil one. *Have we let him do it?* Was lifted up upon the cross that he might draw all men unto him. *Has he drawn us?*

MEMORY VERSE.

Behold the Saviour
On the tree,
How great his love
Who died for me.

BLACKBOARD.

Christ was Lifted up
on the Cross
FOR ME.

LESSON XLI.—OCT. 10, 1875.—WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

SCRIPTURE.—John 13 : 1-9. Commit 3-9; Primary Verse, 8.

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."—PHIL. 2 : 5.

TOPIC.—HUMILITY.

HOME READINGS.

M. Matt. 18 : 1-10.....Like a Little Child.
T. Mark 9 : 33-37.....The Servant of all.
W. Mark 10 : 35-45.....The Chiefest shall be Lowest.
Th. Matt. 23 : 1-12.....Be not called Rabbi.
F. Luke 22 : 24-30.....The Greatest as he that Serves.
S. Phil. 2 : 1-15.....Took the Form of a Servant.
S. Jas. 4 : 1-17.....Giveth Grace to the Humble.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE OCCASION.—What two things did Jesus know? 1, 3. Did he know before this *how* he was to "depart out of this world"? 3 : 14. When did the events in this chapter take place? Who were "his own"? It is said "he loved them to the end." What does that mean? There is a wrong translation in the second verse. The supper was not "ended"—it was only just begun. What had the disciples been doing? Luke 22 : 24-30. Was that the only unhappy feeling at the table? 2.

THE TEACHER.—The disciples had been wrangling over which should be the greatest, or, rather, as to who should wash the feet of the rest. Christ now proposes to teach them a lesson of humility. How had he taught them the same lesson before? Matt. 18 : 1-4; Mark 9 : 33-37; 10 . 35-45; Matt. 23 : 1-12. He washed their feet, knowing what? 2. How had God honored him? Matt. 11 : 27; 28 : 18; John 3 : 35; see, also, 1 Cor. 15 : 27; Heb. 2 : 8. Did he ever stoop lower for us? Luke 18 : 32, 33.

THE LESSON.—What did he do? 4, 5. Whose business was it to wash the feet of guests? 1 Sam. 25: 41. What lesson did he mean to teach by this? 14-17. See how Paul learned this lesson. 1 Cor. 9: 19. Look at 1 Pet. 5: 5 and see what Peter thought it meant.

THE UNWILLING SCHOLAR.—Who was he? 6, 8. What did he first say? 6. What was Christ's answer? 7. How are we like Peter? 1 Cor. 13: 12. What did Peter then declare? 8. What was the reply to that? How does that apply to us? Heb. 10: 22. What did Peter want done then? 9. How often was Peter wrong in this conversation? What was Christ's last reply to him? 10.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE OCCASION.—1–2. It was the day of "unleavened bread," (Luke 22: 7)—so called, not because unleavened bread actually was eaten on that day, but because every bit of leaven and leavened bread were carefully sought for with a lighted candle, and removed from each house. Judas had already made his sordid bargain with the chief-priests—selling his own soul instead of the one he sought to sell. Luke 22: 3–6. He and his little company of disciples were in the "large, upper room, furnished," to which Christ, with prophetic vision, had directed them. Luke 22: 8–13.

There is some question as to what meal is meant by the "supper" referred to in the second verse. Some think that it was not the paschal meal at all, and that Jesus, on this occasion, with his disciples, did not partake of the passover, but was himself crucified on the day that the paschal lamb was slain. If this were true, it would make a poetically complete fulfillment of the type by the anti-type, for Christ, the real Passover, would be put to death on the very day, and almost in the very hour when the prototype was wont to be slain. Others hold that there were two divisions of the paschal meal, the second one being the real passover. The passover is the only one mentioned by the other evangelists, while the other part, which would answer to our modern love-feast, is the one that is dwelt upon by John. Traces of this feast are thought to be found in 1 Cor. 11: 17–34; 2 Pet. 2: 13; and, perhaps, Acts 2: 42, 46; 6: 2.

The fact that it was the day of "unleavened bread" would seem definitely to fix the time as the 14th of Nisan, the day upon which the paschal lamb was slain. The best translation of the second verse makes Christ rise from the table *before* the supper was begun, instead of after it was ended, while, in fact, it was being served. That would do away with the idea of there being either two meals or two parts of one meal, for the supper to which they returned, after the washing, was merely interrupted, and the remaining account coincides with that of the passover as given by the other evangelists. Another incidental proof of the correctness of this position is the fact that the wrangling among the disciples, as to who should be greatest, which was the cause of the lesson being given, took place near the beginning of the meal, and is so mentioned by Luke.

"Before the feast of the passover" Jesus knew that his hour of shame and of agony was at hand. And yet, "having loved his own, he loved them to the end"—to his own death. Love was the cause of his death. He left the peace and rest of Bethany to partake of a meal which he knew preceded his betrayal, his trial, and his crucifixion. His loving his own "unto the end" means something more than that, once being in the midst of distresses, he still continued to love them until the last. It means that, knowing that this paschal meal would be the occasion of the decision of Judas; knowing, too, that they would soon desert him; still, he gave them this, the highest token of his affection, by being present and partaking with them of this feast of love. "With desire," he says, "have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, I will no more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Luke 22: 14, 15.

THE TEACHER.—3. John, ever anxious to hold up Christ as the Son of God, and, in this case, specially so, in order to show how wonderful was the elevation from which he stooped to wash his disciples' feet, makes mention of the fact that at this time Jesus knew that all things had been given into his hands by the Father, and that he had come from God and was going back to God. "And yet," is the thought of John, "though he realized all this, he riseth from supper," etc. Marvelous condescension! No wonder that John was anxious for us to realize that it was the Son of God who did this; for it is hard for the human heart to conceive that such a thing is possible. And yet the one who did this menial service is the one who declared: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father" (Matt. 11:27); "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18); "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (John 3:33); and of him it is said: "He hath put all things under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:27); "For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him." Heb. 2:8. Let us, therefore, as John intended us to do, in looking upon this scene, try to realize in its full force that the one performing this lowly act is indeed the Son of the Most High; the King of kings and Lord of lords—and never more exalted nor more kingly than when glorified by a love that would not fail of its end, even though it had to reach it through such means.

THE LESSON.—5. The *need* of such a lesson was shown by the strife among the disciples, related in Luke 22:24–30. Once more, and for the last time, had arisen a dispute as to which should be the greatest. Other instances are given in the Home Readings, the occasion and rebuke of which it is interesting to note. The query has been asked how the disciples, in this case, came to be wrangling again over this same old question. The most probable solution of this that has been suggested is, that as there was no servant to perform the ceremony of foot-washing, a controversy arose as to which one of the disciples should do it. And that it was in the midst of such a dispute that Christ quietly arose, laid aside his outer garments, girded himself with a towel, and did that which every one of his disciples esteemed to be far too beneath him to be done by himself.

The service was that of a servant (1 Sam. 25:41), and performed while the guests reclined at the table. In laying aside his outer and hindering garments, he reduced himself to the scant apparel of a servant, and so gave literal justification for the assertion in Phil. 2:7: "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." So laid he aside his garments of glory when he was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh"—coming, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Inasmuch as the disciples were ever dreaming of earthly power and glory—of receiving the service of others, instead of giving to others their service, it was most fitting that in this way their hope of ruling should be forever dissipated, and that the idea of lowly ministry should take its place. Another lesson, also, were they taught—that service to others is not degrading, even though it be humble—that it is better to serve than to be served. Three things compel Christ to this act. 1.—Love to his disciples. 2.—The desire by example to teach them an enduring lesson of humility. 3.—The wish also to give them a symbolic idea of the spiritual washing.

One of the most impressive thoughts connected with this lesson is, that Judas, though the devil had already put it into his heart to betray Christ, was one of those who received this proof of his Master's love. To the last he was the recipient of the Lord's mercy, and, when finally the devil took full possession of him and he went out to complete the betrayal, it was just as he had received a sacred morsel from the very hand of the Lord.

AN UNWILLING SCHOLAR.—6–10. It

is likely that they all were unwilling scholars, and that, humbled, they reluctantly beheld their Lord and Master doing what they had all refused to do. But *they* were silent—perhaps from consternation. But when was Peter ever dumb? His ostentatious and vigorous humility and reverence are in sharp contrast with the quieter ways of his brethren. Like them, he ought to have been shamed into silence, for it is not likely that loud-talking, impulsive Peter was quiet when the dispute was in progress. From the wording of the fifth verse it is apparent that Jesus did not come to Peter first. Yet, mark the surprise of the question: "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" Make each word of that question in turn emphatic, and you have an idea of the possible intonations that Peter threw into it. No doubt, however, but that he was honest in his astonishment and in his humility, and that he but spoke what the others felt. The reply is a mild one. *Thou shalt know.* When the lesson was through he told them the reason of it. 14–17. But this, besides, was an intimation that some day he would come to see the fitness of this example—a time that we may be sure came before he could write: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." 1 Pet. 5: 5. *Never shalt thou wash my feet.* Rash and dictatorially affectionate Peter! In just such a manner, when Christ had shown him he was to suffer, had he declared: "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." Matt. 16: 21, 22. *Then* Christ severely rebuked him, saying: "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me." *Now* his words are equally severe: *If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me.* In both cases Peter was clinging to the external glory of Christ—a glory that he expected to share. It was as humiliating to him to accept this service as he deemed it to be for Christ to render it. If he could not suffer the humiliation it was evidence that he had "no part" in Christ, for as a disciple he was to be called, not to honor, but to degradation. Then, too, in accepting this service, he acknowledged that upon him lay a like obligation of humble helpfulness to his brethren. *Also my hands and my head.* Peter was like a pendulum, never resting quietly in the exact center, but swinging from one extreme to the other. Now, agitated at the mere thought of being separated from Christ, he wants not only his feet bathed, but his hands and his head—he would be washed all over rather than that should be. If there be virtue in having the feet washed, much more virtue, is his headlong logic, in having the head and hands also washed. It is probable that when Christ made this a test of further discipleship, Peter began to get some glimmering notion of the real meaning of the rite, and his exclamation thus becomes like that cry of David: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." But Peter again overshoots the mark. He now as much overestimates the importance of this ceremony as before he had underrated it. He thinks that it is symbolic of regenerative cleansing of the heart, whereas it is typical only of the cleansing from one particular sin—the sin of ambition. So is Christ's answer to be construed: *He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.* One plunge in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness is enough to purify the soul and wash away all our sins, but in our daily journeyings the filth of this world will still cling to our feet, and so a daily ablution is necessary. See Heb. 10: 14; Rom. 8: 1; Heb. 10: 12; 2 Cor. 7: 1; 1 John 3: 3.

THE LESSON APPLIED.—14-17. Christ has been talking and acting in symbols. His washing of the feet was a symbol of the humility that his disciples must exercise. His talk with Peter was a symbolic allusion to the cleansing of the Spirit. But every good lesson has a personal application, expressed or plainly implied. In this case it was expressed, and the burden of it is: "Ye should do as I have done to you." The power of

Christ's teachings lay not so much in his words, divinely inspired though they were, as in his example. He might have daily exhorted his disciples to humility through his three years of companionship with them, and at the end left them unhumbled, without this striking manifestation of his own willingness to practise what he preached. Thenceforth they were humble, because they had seen their Lord voluntarily do that which they would not themselves have done. And can we not, dear teachers, learn from this that the major half of successful teaching is actual example—that we must ourselves practise what we desire to get others to do? "*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*"

ADDENDA.—It is a curious bit of history that Christ's injunction: "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet" has received a literal interpretation. In the early church, in the time of Augustine, the Synod of Toledo actually specified the time when the rite should take place. The Greek Church considered it to be a sacramental observance, and the ceremony, even now, obtains at Vienna, in the Russian Court, at Madrid, Lisbon, and among the Mennonites. The Moravians countenance, but do not enjoin the practice. Every year on "Maunday-Thursday" the Pope, with a humility as ostentatious as Peter's, washes the feet of twelve poor old men. But as an observance it is a proclamation of humility—and real humility never proclaims itself. That fact shows how thoroughly the letter killeth, and the spirit only giveth life. The true interpretation is to be found in Rom. 12:10; Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:3.

Called Blossoms.

1.—Christ loves to the end. Nothing can separate us from his love, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature." He is called "Faithful and True." When shall we be able to take into our hearts the idea that with him there is "no variableness nor shadow of turning." We may turn away from him, but never he from us. Ps. 37:28; John 10:27, 28; Rom. 8:35-39; Phil. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 1:12; 4:18; Jas. 1:17.

2.—"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." There is many a thing which now seems very strange in God's dealing with us, but by and by we shall see the reason of it. Even now we can look back and see wherein God's denial was a blessing, and the time shall come when we shall see that God never interfered with our plans except to make our lives better. Then we shall count every refusal better than an answer, every trial better than immunity, every chastisement better than blessing. Job. 5:17; Ps. 25:10; 119:75; Prov. 3:11, 12; Is. 55:8, 9; 64:4; Rom. 5:1-5; 11:33; Heb. 12:5-11.

3.—One of the hardest but most necessary lessons for Christ's disciples to learn is that of humility. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Those who are lowly in spirit receive tokens of divine favor, and, unconsciously, Christian graces bud and blossom in them, just as in the valley the grass springs and the flowers bloom while the high peak above it is utterly barren. Ps. 138:6; 34:18; Prov. 16:5; 29:23; Is. 57:15; 66:2; Matt. 5:3; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6; Jas. 2:5; 4:6; 1 Cor. 1:28, 29; 2 Cor. 6:10.

4.—It is easy to be humble—in theory. But it is not enough intellectually to assent to the obligation to be of a meek and lowly spirit. God wants and requires us actually so to be. "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye *do* them." Matt. 7:21-27; Luke 6:46; 12:47; John 14:23, 24; Rom. 2:13; Jas. 1:25; 4:17.

HYMN.

Thy home is with the humble, Lord!
The lowly are the best;
Thy lodging is in child-like hearts—
Thou makest there thy rest.

Dear Comforter! eternal Love!
If thou wilt stay with me,
Lowly my thoughts of self shall be,
But high indeed of Thee.

BLACKBOARD.

What doth the Lord require of Thee

But to { **DEAL JUSTLY,** **LOVE MERCY,** **WALK HUMBLY**

WITH THY GOD?

—*Micah* 6:8.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—The meeting in an upper chamber at Jerusalem for the last passover meal—what the meal meant—Christ our true Passover. Jesus kept this feast though he knew that Judas would go from it to betray him—loved his disciples to the end (his own death.) The dispute as to which should be greatest—how it arose—no servant to wash their feet.

2.—How Jesus rebuked them by washing them himself—took off his outer garments and so made himself like a servant. Peter, the unwilling scholar—"Lord, dost thou wash my feet?"—Jesus' answer—Peter's reply—"If I wash thee not thou hast no lot nor part with me"—necessity of being washed by Christ—first to be cleansed from all our past sins; second, from daily sins.

3.—"Ye should do as I have done to you"—explain that it is help to others by doing things sometimes that we do not like to do. Read Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3, commenting on each. To be of service to others is better than to be served—no one so unhappy as the one that never denies himself for others.

MEMORY VERSE.

How shall I be loved of God?
For his grace now early seek;
Learn to be like Christ, the Son,
Humble, gentle, loving, meek.

BLACKBOARD.

God Resisteth
THE PROUD,
But giveth Grace to the HUMBLE.
—*Jas.* 4:6.

LESSON XLII.—OCT. 17, 1875.—MANY MANSIONS.

SCRIPTURE.—John 14:1-7. Commit 1-7; Primary Verse, 3.

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."—HEB. 11:16.

TOPIC.—Heaven is our home.

HOME READINGS.

M. Heb. 10: 1-16.....Looking for a City.
T. 1 Cor. 2: 1-16.....Eye hath not Seen."
W. 2 Cor. 5: 1-21.....An House not made with Hands."
Th. Heb. 12: 1-29.....The Heavenly Jerusalem.
F. Rev. 21: 10-27.....Its Dimensions.
S. Rev. 7: 1-17.....Its Inhabitants.
S. Rev. 22: 1-21.....Its Bliss.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

OUR MANSIONS.—1, 2. What comfort did Jesus give the disciples? 1. What three things "troubled" their hearts? 13:21, 33, 38. What reason does Christ give in the first verse of the lesson why their hearts should not be troubled? Was there any one of the disciples to whom this was not said? 13:29, 30. What was, instead, said of him? Mark 14:21. What special comfort besides that in our lesson did Christ give to Peter? Luke 22:31, 32. What does Christ mean by "my Father's house"? See by what six other names heaven is called. Matt. 3:12; 2 Cor. 12:4; Eph. 5:5; Heb. 4:9; 11:16; 12:22. Look at Rev. 7:4-9 and see how many people will be in it. Look at verses 13, 14 of the same chapter, and see who its inhabitants are. Turn to Rev. 21:8 and see who will be excluded. Read Rev. 21:10-27 and see how it is described. In verse 4 of that chapter see what will there never trouble us again. Do not you want to go to such a place?

ITS MAIN ATTRACTION.—3. Whom do you think you will most long to see in heaven? Who

will come to receive you? Who is the light of that city? Rev. 21:23. If you are among those who tread its golden streets, find in Rev. 7:10 what you will do; and in Rev. 7:17 what the Lamb will do for you.

THE WAY THITHER.—4-7. What did Christ tell them in the fourth verse? What was Thomas' reply? 5. What three things did Jesus say he was? 6. Why is Christ called *The Way?* Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19, 20. Why *The Truth?* 1:17. Why *The Life?* 1:3, 4; 11:25. Why do we need Christ as *The Life?* Rom. 8:2; Eph. 2:1. Why do we need him as *The Truth?* 8:32-34. Why as *The Way?* 6. How is it possible for us to know God? 7.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

OUR MANSIONS.—1, 2. We now enter upon the consideration of that portion of the gospels which the devout Olshausen most happily terms, "the Holy of Holies." This farewell discourse of Christ stands alone, even in the Book of books. How widely different are the parting song and blessing of Moses. Deut. 32; 33. Paul's farewell to the elders of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38) is very tender and very touching, but neither his words nor those of Moses have such sweet comfort in them, such heavenly balm, nor come to us so evidently direct from the very heart of God. Where else can we get such a revelation of the love and compassion of God, such a sense of divine companionship in our earthly pilgrimage, such full satisfaction for the soul as in the fourteenth, to and including the seventeenth, chapters of John? They open with the benediction: "Let not your heart be troubled." And how many have read those words and have felt a great rest and peace come to them just as when Christ spoke to the troubled waters of Galilee, "and there was a great calm." Young converts and aged saints alike find comfort, and restfully turn to these words. What would our world be if they were blotted out!

To the disciples the need of these words was very great. They had been humbled by their lesson in humility. They had been told that one of their number would betray him. They had been alarmed by Christ's saying: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the Jews: Whither I go ye can not come; so now I say unto you." And further, Peter, in reference to his protestations of pre-eminent faithfulness, had been told that ere the cock should crow twice, he should thrice deny his Master. Balm, then, indeed, was needed for these sore hearts. How soothing was that which Jesus applied. To Peter, especially, as being the one just rebuked, were these words comforting. Luke tells us that besides this, Jesus told him that, "Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not." Luke 22:31, 32. But there was one who did not hear the gracious words which Christ said to the disciples. Judas had already gone out on his traitorous errand. He had heard only that fearful prophecy of evil: "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born." Mark 14:21.

The meaning of the latter clause of the first verse is by no means clear. The verb, in the original, will allow of several renderings, and scholars are not entirely of one mind as to which is the proper one. We place the different constructions side by side:

1.—Believe in God; believe also in me.

2.—(If) ye believe in God, ye believe also in me.

3.—Believe in God, and (then) ye will also believe in me.

4.—Ye believe in God, (therefore) believe also in me.

The weight of scholarship is thrown in favor of the first—our own preference and judgment pronounce for the last.

In my Father's house. Christ seems to be speaking after the analogy of the temple at Jerusalem, which he had called: "My Father's house" (2:16). This had numerous rooms in it, and, as he mentioned that heavenly house, the habit of their mind would, no doubt, lead them

to turn to the temple for a help to their imagination. The comfort of this passage lies largely in the fact that heaven is a *locality*, and not a *state*. Our thoughts of heaven do not launch out into infinite space, finding no place of rest, returning to us exhausted and defeated. They wing their way straight to a locality where, in a special sense, God is—"to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. 12:22, 23. "Heaven" is the *place* from which Christ came, and to which again he ascended. John 3:13; Acts 1:11. It is a "country"—"a better country, that is, an heavenly," and those who seek it are "strangers and pilgrims" here. Heb. 11:13–16. And in that country God "hath prepared for them a city"—"a city that hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10. John, in Rev. 21, gives that city solidity, and makes us enter in at its gates and tread its golden streets. Luke speaks of those "many mansions" as "everlasting habitations." Luke 16:9. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the latter is spoken of as being in "Abraham's bosom"—an allusion to his being in heaven that would particularly appeal to a devout Jew. Christ speaks of that happy place as "paradise," and promises the repentant thief that "to-day" he shall be there with him. Paul so terms it (2 Cor. 12:4), and so does John. Rev. 2:7. Paradise, curiously enough, in its first signification, means "a foreign land," and in its second "the best land." Paul, in Hebrews (3:11; 4:1, 3, 8, 11), speaks of it as "a rest" that remaineth (does not pass away) to the people of God—a Sabbath without an end, the word "rest" being used specially with reference to the Sabbath day. "*Many* mansions"—room enough for all—and to be inhabited by "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues." It is toward these glorious habitations, this city of light and splendor, and joy unutterable, toward this heavenly Jerusalem, where there is no more night, nor sorrow, where all tears are wiped away, and there is no more pain, toward these golden streets trod by celestial beings and the hosts of the redeemed, to the dwelling-place of the Most High that the dying Christian turns his longing eyes. As the night of death closes around him, out of its darkness in glory arises a vision of this city of cities, this home of the soul, and toward it his freed spirit exultantly wings its way. Not alone, though, for Christ comes "to receive him to Himself," that where He is his follower may be also. Alas, that there are those to whom death is a going out into a horror of great darkness that has no foothold nor place of rest—a falling into a dark and infinite abyss. And so would it be with us all had not Christ torn aside its veil of night and shown to us that resplendent city, the habitation prepared for those that love him.

If it were not so—he would have told them. Thus he reminds them of his veracity, his tenderness and his affection, and of his fidelity. Of his faithfulness in speaking of the future they already had and were still to have examples. 13:21, 38; 15:18; 16:1–4; 21:18. There are some who make of this last clause a question: "Would I have told you?"—thus appealing to a veracity which they knew was unquestionable. *I go*—through death. The cross is the key that unlocked the gate of heaven. *To prepare a place.* Best of all—we shall feel *at home* in heaven. We shall not only have a mansion, but one that is specially prepared with reference to our soul-wants. It will have a special fitness that of itself will stamp it as ours.

THEIR GREAT ATTRACTION. — No doubt heaven, to the thought of the majority of people, weary with their toil, is especially welcome as a place of rest. To others, again, it is a place of meeting with those who have gone before. To others, still, as a place of unmixed joy—

of happiness unutterable. And to some as a place where they will see their Redeemer. To them Jesus will be the great attraction. Of such a mind, sooner or later, will all Christians be. The other desires are not sinful, nor is God jealous of such loves and longings. He knows that the time is coming when, above all else, we shall desire to look upon His face and the face of His Son—when we shall awake in his likeness and be satisfied. With Paul to die was "to depart and be with Christ," and he expresses his longing to go by saying that he is "willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." Phil. 1:23; 2 Cor. 5:8. The redeemed who stand before the throne, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands cry: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Rev. 7:10. Willing homage, we may be sure. No temple there to worship in, for "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it"—no need of the sun, "for the Lamb is the light thereof." Rev. 21:22, 23. "No more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it." And the crowning joy is that "his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads." Rev. 22:3, 4. It is the Lamb that "shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters." Rev. 7:17. The Lamb will be the center of all adoration, and this he knew when he sought to calm the troubled hearts of his disciples, by assuring them that he would come again and receive them to himself, that where he was they should be also. *Though I go.* Jesus our forerunner. Heb. 4:14; 7:25–27; 10:12. *I will come again.* When? *Alford* says: "This *coming* of His is *begun* (ver. 18) in his resurrection; *carried on* (ver. 23) in the spiritual life (ch. 16:22ff), the making *them* ready for the place prepared; *further advanced* when each by death is fetched away to be with him (Phil. 1:23); *fully completed* at his coming in glory, when they shall forever be with him (1 Thess. 4:7) in the perfected resurrection state. The more simple explanation is that while it may refer to both the judgment day and that of the believer's death, it has special reference to the latter. Hence it is that Stephen could cry: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Acts 7:59.

THE WAY THITHER.—*Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know*—that is, they might have known if they had only thought. They knew from whence he came, and often had he told them that for him the way back thither was the way of the cross. But honest, doubting Thomas, slow of comprehension, wants to make sure that he comprehends it, and so says: "We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?"—for ourselves. Christ's answer is to that last desire. *I am the way, the truth, the life.*

THE WAY. 1.—"*The way* into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was standing."—*Heb.* 9:8.

2.—"I am the *door:* by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."—*John* 10:9.

3.—"No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—*John* 14:6.

4.—"Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—*Eph.* 2:18.

5.—"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh . . . . let us draw near with a true heart."—*Heb.* 10:19–22.

THE TRUTH. 1.—"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." *John* 1:17.

2.—"The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."—1 *John* 5:20.

3.—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."—*John* 18:37.

4.—"All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 *Cor.* 1:20.

5.—"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—*John* 8:32.

THE LIFE. 1.—"In him was life."—*John* 1:4.

2.—"The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world."—*John* 6:33.

3.—"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."—*John* 6:47.

4.—"Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—*John* 17: 2.

5.—"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—*John* 10: 28.

6.—"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—*John* 11: 25.

We need Christ as *The Life* because we are by nature "dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2: 1. Without spiritual life we could not walk in *The Way*. But after the reception of spiritual life we need something more to enable us to walk, for Satan holds us in bonds as well as in death (2 Pet. 2: 19), and they must be broken. Hence we also need Christ as *The Truth*, for "*The Truth* shall make you free." And lastly, it is not enough to be born again, nor to be made free from our bonds; we must walk in *The Way*. We must "*follow*" Jesus. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Jas. 4: 17. "Ye are my friends if ye *do* whatsoever I command you." 15: 14.

If ye had known me. Certainly here Christ makes himself the equal of God. To know him is to know the Father. So he also said: "I and my Father are one." 10: 30; "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me." 12: 45; "That ye may believe that the Father is in me and I in him." 10: 38. And he prayed: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." 17: 21. There is a pathos in this exclamation, after such long companionship and teaching. *Henceforth*, (though,) *ye know him and have seen him.* The evidence would be complete on his death, and through the Comforter they would be led into absolute surety of the truth.

Culled Blossoms.

1.—None but Christ can say: "Let not thy heart be troubled." When the soul is, like a sea, tempest tossed, do its billows go down at any other bidding? In the moment of distress and of agony, then we know how comfortless and empty are all other sources of solace. Ps. 55: 18; Is. 26: 3; 57: 21; John 14: 27; 16: 33; 2 Cor. 1: 3, 4; 2: 14; 1 John 4: 4; 5: 4, 5.

2.—What a debt of gratitude do we owe to Christ that he not only unlocked the gates of heaven, "but made it seem like *home* to us, thereby taking away the terror of the grave and of the life beyond, so that his saints, like Paul, often long to depart and be with Christ. Is. 25: 8; Hos. 13: 14; Rom. 8: 23; 1 Cor. 15: 54, 55; 2 Cor. 5: 1–4; Phil. 3: 20, 21; Heb. 2: 14, 15.

3.—We are not only to be with Christ, but to be honored by him—not only to see his glory, but to share it. Matt. 19: 28; Luke 12: 43, 44; 22: 28–30; Rom. 8: 17, 37; 1 Cor. 6: 2; 2 Thess. 4: 7; 2 Tim. 2: 12; Rev. 3: 21.

4.—Christ is *The Life* because he is a way of escape from death. John 3: 36; 5: 24, 25; Rom. 6: 4; 8: 6–8; Eph. 2: 1–6; Col. 2: 13; 1 John 5: 12.

5.—Christ is *The Truth*—the mirror in which we behold ourselves as we actually are. Is any one satisfied with his own goodness, let him look into the perfect goodness of Christ. Does any one pride himself on his wisdom; how tawdry will it seem beside that divine wisdom of Jesus that encompasseth all things. Or is one a philanthropist; what comfort can he gain by placing his love of men beside that of the great Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep. All comparison with Christ shows to us *the truth*—that we are deficient in all the qualities of godly manhood. Gen. 6: 5; 8: 21; Prov. 20: 9; Is. 64: 6; Jer. 17: 9; Rom. 3: 23; 5: 7, 8; 7: 18; 2 Cor. 3: 18; Gal. 3: 22; 5. 17; Eph. 4: 13.

6.—Christ *The Way*—not only the necessary way—the only approach to God, but also, the example for us to follow. Matt. 11: 29; John 15: 10; Rom. 15: 2, 3; Eph. 5: 2; Phil. 2: 5, 7; Col. 3: 13; 1 Pet. 2. 21–23; 1 John 2: 6; 3: 3, 16.

HYMN.

I will sing you a song of that beautiful land,
The far-away home of the soul,
Where no storms ever beat on the glittering strand,
While the years of eternity roll.

Oh, the home of the soul, in my vision and dreams
Its bright jasper walls I can see,
Till I fancy but thinly the veil intervenes
Between the fair city and me.

BLACKBOARD.

I go to Prepare a Place
FOR YOU
That where I am
THERE YE MAY BE ALSO.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

OUR MANSIONS.—What makes you love your home? Well, there are a good many things. Your father and mother are there. It is the place where your brothers and sisters are — where the little baby brother or sister is. Oh yes, and where perhaps you have a little room, you and your brothers, which you have all to yourselves as your own. It is prepared specially. Has a crib or little bed, a little looking glass, a little wash-stand—everything selected just for you. How many have such a room? Ah, only a few. How many would like to have one? Every one of you. How many times you have wished for one just to your liking. You have thought of the sort of house you would like—a large, elegant house with plenty of rooms in it, in the midst of beautiful trees, where the grass is green and smooth, and where flowers are plenty, and where there is everything that heart could wish. Well, there are but very few that can have such a home as that in this life, but in the next life, if we really desire it, we can have one far better. Jesus says: "Let not your hearts be troubled." "In my Father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." Eighteen hundred years ago Jesus went to prepare a place for you. There you can have a mansion all to yourself more beautiful than anything you ever saw — *and it will be prepared expressly for you.* I can't tell you what it will be like, but I can read to you how the city looks in which it will be. (Read and comment on Rev. 21: 10-27.) Then take up the question: "Who will you like most to see there?" and follow with the topic: "The Way Thither."

MEMORY VERSE.

There is a home, a peaceful home,
A home of joy and love;
And they that bear the cross below
Shall wear the crown above.

BLACKBOARD.

A BEAUTIFUL MANSION,
WHITE ROBE,
CROWN OF LIFE
PREPARED FOR YOU.

LESSON XLIII.—OCT. 24, 1875.—THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

SCRIPTURE.—John 15: 1-8. Commit 1-8; Primary Verse, 8.

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
5 I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.
6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By their fruits ye shall know them."—MATT. 7: 20.

TOPIC.—FRUIT-BEARING.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is. 5: 1-7.....The Unprofitable Vineyard.
T. Matt. 21: 33-44.....God Refused his Fruits.
W. Luke 13: 1-9.....The Unfruitful Fig Tree.
Th. Mark 11: 12-26....."Nothing but Leaves."
F. Matt. 7: 15-27.....Known by our Fruits.
S. Matt. 13: 1-12..... Thirty to an Hundred Fold.
S. Gal. 5: 1-26.....The Fruits of the Spirit.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE TRUE VINE.—Who is the True Vine? 1. By what other names had he called himself? 4: 10; 6: 32; 10: 7, 11. Why did he liken himself to a vine? The "branches" get all their life — from what? Now look at 14: 19, last part of the verse, and see wherefrom we obtain our spiritual life? Turn to Rom. 8: 32; 1 Cor. 3: 21-23 and find what else we obtain by being the branches of the True Vine. Who is "the husbandman"? 1. Read the second Home Reading so that you will be able to

tell who is the "householder," the "husbandmen," the "servants," and the "Son."

THE BRANCHES.—If Christ is the Vine, what are we, who are his disciples? 5. What is expected of the branches? 2. Of how many branches is this expected? 2. Is it expected then, of *you?* What is done to the branch that bears? 2. What does "purgeth it" mean? Why is this done? What is the only way by which we can bear fruit? 4. If we "abide" in him what about fruit then? 5. If we do not abide in him—what then? 6. Of how much importance, then, is it that *you* "abide" in Christ? The branches draw on the vine for all the sustenance they want; what does Christ say that we can do? 7. What is the condition? If we bear fruit, whose glory is it? 8. Where do the branches get their power to bear fruit?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE VINE IN METAPHOR.—The familiarity of the Jews with the culture of the vine led early to its use as an illustration of truth, on various subjects. All the orators, poets, and prophets referred to it for this purpose. Jotham reproved the men of Shechem by a parable in which the vine figured. Judges 9:7-15. The Psalmist compared God's covenant people, in their history, to a vine brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan; which had flourished till its hedges were broken down, so that men and beasts devoured the fruit and destroyed the branches. Ps. 80:8-14. Isaiah says: "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard"; and then follows a powerful expostulation with the people for their ungrateful sin, under the figure of a vine which utterly disappoints the hopes of the owner of a vineyard. Is. 5: 1-7. And so, all through the prophecies, Judah or Israel is a vineyard with which God variously deals, or threatens or promises to deal. Is. 27:2, 3; Jer. 2:21; Ezek. 15:2-6; Hosea 10:1.

It could not be that our Saviour, who constantly drew his illustrations from familiar objects, would overlook the vine, which was on every hillside. His first miracle was in changing water into wine—an indication of his power to raise a lower nature to a higher. John 2: 1-11. At the last supper he used wine to represent his "blood, shed for the remission of sin," and said: "This cup is the new testament in my blood." Matt. 26:27, 28, Luke 22:20. He spake the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, to show God's sovereign right to bestow his grace as he might see fit. Matt. 20:1-16. Again, he illustrated different dispositions as to obedience, by the parable of the two sons who were sent by their father to work in his vineyard. And his most cutting parable against the chief-priests and Pharisees, who were conspiring to murder him, was that of the householder that planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen who refused him the fruits, and slew his son and heir.

THE TRUE VINE.—Thinking, perhaps, of the wine cup, which had been in his hands, he suddenly said: "I am the true vine." This was according to his method of boldly applying a metaphor to himself. His disciples had heard him say, I am the true Bread; I am the true Water; I am the true Shepherd; I am the true Door. What all these things signify, in ordinary uses and relationships, I am in the higher uses and relationships. They were not startled, then, to hear him break forth: "I am the true vine." Doubtless, something external showed the disciples what led to this striking statement. But what did it mean? The vine was one of the most precious of the products of the earth—in addition to grateful shade and sweet odor, it bore abundantly, and yielded food, drink, and medicine. Its richness was proverbial. It was a sign of fertility. How well, then, it represented the Saviour in the affluence of his gifts—Him in whom we have "all things" (Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 3:21-23); and "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30. But while this might explain his being called *a* vine what led him to say that he was "*the true vine?*" A nice piece of

Biblical criticism comes in here, owing to the fact that the Greek language contains two quite distinct words, which are both represented by the word "true" in English. In Greek, *alethes* means true, as opposed to what is utterly false; while *alethinos* means true in the sense of full and perfect, as opposed to what is shadowy and incomplete. It is this latter word which Jesus here uses; to signify that other vines, however real as far as they went, (as Israel was indeed God's vine,) yet very imperfectly filled out the idea, while He was the full conception, the true realization. Nothing else was worthy to be called a vine.

THE HUSBANDMAN.—A vine is supposed to be planted by one who has selected it, and who will see to its cultivation. Thus, every vineyard had its owner, who valued highly his property, and took great pains to make it productive. If Christ, then, is a vine, and the one true, or complete vine, who has bestowed such a gift upon the world, and who will care for the product? Jesus answers: "My Father is the husbandman." This word "husbandman" does not denote a mere day-laborer, but the renter, or the owner of the vineyard. It is used in the Greek version of the Old Testament, in 2 Chron. 26:10, to denote the occupation of king Uzziah; where in our version we read that "he loved husbandry," and had "vine dressers in the mountains." Christ, also, in his parable of the husbandmen, in Matt. 21:31–41, uses them to represent the rulers of the Jewish people. This reference to his Father as the husbandman shows that Jesus spoke of himself as the vine, in his lower or human condition, or in his mediatorial office; in which he was carrying out his Father's will, and was becoming a medium of blessing to the world. Thus he always puts it. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," etc., John 3:16, 17. "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me." 5:30. And the Father not only originally sent His son to die for men, and to gather out a church for the redeemed, but He continues to care for the church and for each member of it; as was set forth in connection with the application of the similitude of the shepherd and his flock. 10:29. This also occasions the sending of the Holy Spirit, to nourish the graces of true believers, and he is said to proceed from the Father and the Son. 15:26. Thus the entire Trinity is engaged in the work of human salvation.

THE BRANCHES.—A vine has branches and these are numerous. This fits it the better to be an illustration of the relation of Christ and his people; since all the branches, even the smallest and the most remote, are connected with the vine. And herein is an advance of thought over the idea illustrated in the similitude of a shepherd and his flock. The shepherd cares for his flock, watches over it, defends it, but yet is separate from it. He and it are not vitally one. But the vine is the very life of the branches, they and it being organically united. This was the fact which led to the present parable, as it symbolized one of the most important truths of religion. "Every branch in me" are the words of Christ. That is the very idea of a branch—that it is a part of something else, of an original stem. And so a true Christian is not an independent spiritual existence, so to speak, but an outgrowth of Christ. In idea and in fact, we have first the vine, and then the branch in it; and so we have first Christ, and then his followers, who have spiritual life in him. Thus he is said to be "our life." Col. 3:3, 4; John 14:6. It is also a very common expression in the New Testament to allude to saints as persons who are "in Christ." Rom. 8:1; 12:5; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2. This should powerfully impress us with the value of Christ to the soul, as its "all in all." Some have puzzled over the expression "every branch in me," as to whether it means all those who are truly saints, or all who profess to be such. Practically it does not matter much which view one takes, (Barnes inconsistently asserts both,) since the

true saint *is* in Christ, and every professed saint *claims* to be in him; and thus both are under the obligations which arise from such a relation, and must expect to be dealt with accordingly.

FRUIT-BEARING.—The use of a vine-branch is to bear fruit. It may incidentally serve other purposes; it may have beauty, and emit perfume, and give shade; but its main use is to produce grapes. Failing to do that, the owner is disappointed with the result, no matter how conspicuous the other qualities may be. The same is true of the professed disciple of Christ. He must bear spiritual fruit. What is spiritual fruit? Holiness and usefulness, or personal purity of character, and the exertion of a saving influence over others. Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 5:9; James 3:17. These are the two results which God has in view. A man is converted and made to partake of the benefits of Christ's salvation, in order that he may be saved, and that, through him, others may be saved. Every grape has seeds in it of other grapes. If now a branch is persistently barren, the husbandman cuts it entirely away, as only an incumbrance to the vine. Nor is he satisfied with a small show of fruit. He wishes it to be abundant and large. And so, "he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The pruning knife is put to use, to remove wild growths. Those acquainted with the vine know how much of this needs to be done if one would have fruit of good size and quality. At the base of every leaf-stem a shoot grows out, which, if not taken off, draws away the juices of the vine. Thus the sharp knife, which seems to be doing a work of destruction, really is promoting the noblest life of the plant. And so, when our Father prunes the spiritual branches, by cruel persecution, sharp temptation, or sore affliction, he is checking our redundant and barren growths, and developing the rich "fruit of the spirit." See Heb. 12:11.

SOURCE OF FRUITFULNESS.—In verses 3-5, Jesus impresses the fundamental thought that there can be no spiritual fruitfulness except by continued union with himself. It was not sufficient that they were now his disciples; they must remain such, in every sense. "Now ye are clean," that is, you are purified from your past sin, and accepted for my sake, in accordance with "the word which I have spoken unto you." By the "ye" he meant his true apostles, and not Judas, who was at the moment away with the chief-priests. 13:10, 11. But now something further is necessary: "*Abide* in me," and in that case I will also abide in you. Faith must lay hold of Christ continually, every hour, every moment, would we receive the necessary grace; just as a branch has all its life and fruitfulness on condition of maintaining its connection with the vine. "Without me (or severed from me) ye can do nothing." Obedience and faith are the conditions of spiritual fruitfulness. The men who achieve most for religion are those whose faith in Jesus is most simple and perpetual.

RESULT OF SEPARATION.—What if a branch should be separated from the vine? The fact would bring not only unfruitfulness, but death and utter destruction. The husbandman cuts off the fruitless branches, they wither, and then men gather them up from the ground into heaps and burn them; a fearful symbol of the fact that spiritual unfruitfulness denotes a worthless soul doomed to destruction. Notice that Jesus never speaks of a final restoration. "They are burned" means they are destroyed; not they are eventually saved. If a man never was really converted, never had true faith in Christ, he will prove to be without fruit, and in the end he will perish. Compare Matt. 3:10; 7:19; 21:19; Luke 13:6-9. But what if a man was once converted? The rule is the same; he must continue in faith and in fruitfulness, or he will be "cast forth as a branch," and will wither, and be burned. The only evidence one can have of true discipleship is a present holy life. When a professed Christian ceases to abide in

Christ the process of death at once begins.

RESULT OF ABIDING.—In confirmation of the blessed result of abiding in him, Jesus declares: "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This, of course, is to be taken with the understanding that such a state of mind implies all the conditions of prevailing prayer which are elsewhere named; such as reverence, submission, penitence, obedience, faith, a forgiving spirit, gratitude, perseverence, etc. For a soul thus characterized will be in the very condition which makes prayer a power. It is in sympathy with the divine plans and aims; it is enlightened and purified in its desires; it is ready to be used for the promotion of God's cause; it feels its dependence on God and on Christ; it can wisely be trusted with the gifts which it asks. Here is the secret of prevailing prayer, and the explanation of the ill success which discourages some petitioners.

THE TEST OF DISCIPLESHIP.—And so we learn, as Jesus reminds us, what true discipleship is. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." In no other way can we grow into a genuine identification with the kingdom of Christ. What he wants is, not our names, but our hearts; not our outward profession, but our actual and loving service. Church membership alone does not make a Christian; mere baptism brings no one into the real kingdom. We must live for Christ and by faith in his redemption. And so it is also with a church. It can never prove its claim to belong to Christ by mere succession, or ceremonial practices, or an orthodox creed; but only by practical piety, by "bearing much fruit." And we are happy in that prophecy now in process of fulfillment: "Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit." Is. 27: 6.

Called Blossoms.

1.—Our connection with Christ, The Vine, must be something more than a form. The branch must have an actual connection — must penetrate deep into the Vine in order to have life. There is a time coming when even all seeming union with Christ will be sundered, and the "dead branches" will be consumed. Is. 5: 24; Mal. 3: 3, 18; Matt. 3: 10–12; 7: 22, 23; 13: 40–42; 25: 31–46; 2 Thess. 1: 7, 8.

2.—The real proof of a vital union with him is that we bear fruit — much fruit. Not necessarily as much fruit nor fruit so large and fair as our neighbors. We need not distress ourselves with such unwise comparisons. The fruit that we are to bear is "the fruit of the Spirit." Unless we bear these we do not "abide" in Christ. Rom. 7: 4; Gal. 5: 22, 23; Eph. 5: 9; 2 Pet. 1: 8; Rev. 3: 1–3.

3.—The judgment against false professors, it will be noticed, is not pronounced by God alone— "men gather them and cast them into the fire." The world knows real devotion from false. Matt. 7: 1, 6; John 13: 35; 17: 20, 21; 2 Cor. 3: 2; 1 John 3: 13.

4.—Is the husbandman unkind that "purgeth" the vines — cutting off all waste and useless growth? He is apparently merciless, but really of great mercy. He prunes that the vines may bear. And so afflictions come to us from our Heavenly Father — not undesigned nor vexing us with needless torture. He "purgeth" his vines that they "may bring forth more fruit." Job 5: 17; Ps. 119: 67, 75; 94: 12; Prov. 3: 11, 12; 13: 24; Rom. 5: 1–5; Heb. 12: 6–11; Jas. 1: 12; 1 Pet. 5: 6, 7; Rev. 3: 19.

5.—It is to the glory of God that we bear much fruit — not to our own. And it is invariably so, that, however much men may sneer at the idea of a new spiritual birth, instinctively they recognize the fact that no man can live a true Christian life without divine help. When a bad man suddenly becomes good—an irritable man, a marvel of meekness, and a selfish man, a wonder of self-denial, then men can not help but acknowledge that God has changed the fountains of that man's life, and so they glorify Him who made the change and not him who is changed. 8; Matt. 5: 16; 12: 35; 1 Cor. 6: 20; 10: 31.

HYMN.

I gave my life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou might'st ransomed be,
And quickened from the dead;
I gave, I gave my life for thee,
What hast thou given for me?

My Father's house of light,
My glory-circled throne,
I left for earthly night,
For wand'rings sad and lone;
I left, I left it all for thee,
Hast thou left aught for me?

BLACKBOARD.

He that Abideth in Christ
BEARETH MUCH FRUIT.
He that Abideth not in Him
IS CAST FORTH
AND IS WITHERED.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Make this an object lesson. Take into the class a portion of a grape vine, having both branches and fruit. Get the class to tell which is the *vine*, which the *branches*, which the *fruit*.

1.—Get them to say what the vine does for the branches—gives them life, supports them, enables them to bear fruit. Then read the first part of the fifth verse: "*I am the Vine, ye are the branches.*" Question as to *who* is the vine, and who are the branches. *Why* is Christ the vine? Because we receive from him life, support, and are enabled to bear good fruits.

2.—Why are we called the branches? No life in ourselves without the Vine. If a branch does not abide in the vine what happens? Withers. Read verse 6. What is expected of the branches—that they shall bear what? If a branch does not bear fruit what is it good for? What is done with it? Read first clause of verse 2. Will a branch bear fruit if it is pretty near the vine? If it is close to the vine? If it is held against the vine? Must it be in the vine? So must we be in Christ. Not pretty near him, nor close to him—but *in* him. Read verse 5.

3.—What sort of fruit must we bear? Read Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 5:9. Put them down on the board and make the class learn them by heart. Comment on and illustrate each. Why should we bear fruit? Read verse 8. To glorify God. By bearing fruit the smallest can glorify God.

MEMORY VERSE.

On Christ the living Vine
As branches we depend;
If we in him abide
We will with fruitage bend.

BLACKBOARD.

CHRIST THE VINE,
WE THE BRANCHES.
ABIDE IN
BEAR FRUIT FOR H I M.

LESSON XLIV.—OCT. 31, 1875.—FRIENDS AND FOES OF JESUS.

SCRIPTURE.—John **15 : 11-19.** Commit **11-19**; Primary Verse, **12.**

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."—JAS. 4:4.

TOPIC.—THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

HOME READINGS.

M.	**Rom.**	**5: 1-21**	**Loved us while Sinners.**
T.	**1 John**	**4: 7-21**	**Loved us before we loved Him.**
W.	**Luke**	**19: 1-10**	**Loved and came to save the Lost.**
Th.	**John**	**10: 1-18**	**Gave his life for his Sheep.**
F.	**1 John**	**1: 1-10**	**In his Love—in the Light.**
S.	**1 John**	**5: 1-18**	**He that loveth Him overcometh.**
S.	**Rom.**	**8: 28-39**	**From His Love nothing can Separate.**

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

CHRIST'S LOVE—ITS JOY.—What were "these things" spoken of in verse 11? 1, 7, 9. Why were they spoken? 11. Do you think it would be possible for us to think of any joy greater than that which Christ has? Can we have that? How great is it? Phil. 4: 7. What had he said to his disciples before that was like this? 14: 27. What was it that the angels sang when Jesus was born? Luke 2: 14. What does Christ require of us? 12. How are his disciples to be known? 13: 35.

THE TEST.—How did Christ *prove* that he loved us? 13. How did he prove he was the "good shepherd"? 10: 11. What made his loving us remarkable? Rom. 5: 8. For whom did he die? Luke 19: 10. Did Christ, then, lay down his life for his "friends"?

ITS REWARD.—Who are his "friends"? 14. What is the reward of those who serve him—they are called what? What are they *not* called? 15. By what other and better title still are we called? Gal. 4: 6, 7. How did we become so? 16. For what two things did he choose us? 16. Why will God grant "whatsoever" we may ask of him in Christ's name? 14: 13. What is the condition? Matt. 21: 22. Did he choose us merely that we might have a good time here? 18. What is meant by "the world"?

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

INTRODUCTORY.—After Jesus had finished stating and applying the similitude of the vine and the branches, he affirmed the intimacy, tenderness, and depth of his love for his disciples, by declaring that as the Father had loved him, so had he loved them! What words can tell the love of the Father for his Son—one so pure, obedient, and loving in his personal character; who was his "only-begotten" (John 1: 18; 3: 16) and thus sustained a peculiarly near and dear relationship; and who had dwelt in bliss with him from eternity, "before the world was." 17: 5. It is because of the Father's peculiar and intense affection for his Son that the sacrifice of that Son for the salvation of this lost world is set forth as such an astounding token of God's pity for man! chap. 3: 16; Rom. 8: 32. Yet Jesus assures his disciples that he just as truly loves them as the Father did the Son. He took them up into himself; for love always identifies its object with itself. Having affirmed this great fact, he bids them "continue in his love." He had before bidden them "abide in him" (verses 4–7); but now he varies the language, to make the duty more touching, attractive, and easy. This did not mean merely that they were to continue to love him; the idea is deeper than that. They were to remain encompassed by his love to them—living in the consciousness that he loved them. Does our experience rise to that point? He lets us into the secret of such an abiding in love; it is keeping his commandments (verse 10). It was thus he remained in possession of his Father's love. The philosophy of it is, that in order to unintermitted love, there must be but one will. Antagonism of wills destroys love, both as principle and as emotion; for love is a union of souls.

The Love of Christ.

ITS JOY.—11. It is a common mistake, and a very great one, to think that to be a disciple of Christ is to lead a life of melancholy. The reason is not far to find. Those who take their delight in sin naturally think that to renounce sin is to renounce delight. Selfish souls never can understand a life of love; it seems to them very much like suicide. A man who seeks pleasure in living for himself supremely is asked to turn from that end of action, and to live for God and Christ supremely. Alas! it seems to him more like an invitation to die, than to live!

It is because we do not understand a state of which we have had no experience. Now listen to Christ's words: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." They were to be made partakers of his joy; just as before he had promised them (14:27) that they should share his peace. They knew the fact of his joy, even if its sources were too deep for their comprehension as yet. For three years, through the most trying scenes, he had been their leader and intimate friend, and they had been struck with the uniformity of his peace and serenity. It was not boisterous, but it was real, such as fulfilled the prophecy: "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows." Ps. 45:7. Possibly in saying this he also glanced forward to his coming experience in the eternal future, when the reward of his present and approaching sufferings would be enjoyed, and his disciples would share it with him. Heb. 12:2; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Pet. 4:13. The joy of the Christian must be real and supreme; for it is based (1) on a consciousness of doing right; (2) on a sense of God's favor; (3) on union forever with Christ; (4) on love to every one, and especially to the holy; (5) on a grateful use of all earthly good; and, (6) on a sure hope of heaven. No saint was ever yet disappointed as to the fulfillment of this promise.

Its Condition.—12. But this blessed state could not be selfishly sought, or retained. No man goes to heaven along a private road. He must travel on the king's highway, on which he will find a company of like-minded disciples. These he must recognize as brethren, and must love them even as he is loved. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." There is a divine succession in this love. The Father loved the Son, yet gave him for the world; the Son loved the Father, yet left his presence to die for men; and we are to love Jesus and all who are his, and to show it by our willingness to deny ourselves for them. Joy must be the fruit of love; the happiness of doing good, and of finding pleasure in the happiness of others. What other founder of a religion, or of a philosophy has set forth such a fundamental commandment? has proposed such a badge? Here is a new religion, and the professors of it are to wear a uniform—the uniform of love! The early Christians astonished the world by showing this spirit of love. Read Acts 2:44–47; 4:32–35. Selfishness has such a hold upon our nature that the triumph of love shows divine grace, and makes a deep impression on the unconverted. This explains the earnestness with which John dwells upon this topic in his first epistle. See 1 John 2:9–11; 3:10–18; 4:7–21. He comes back to it again and again, because he had imbibed the spirit of Jesus, and knew how fundamental love was to all religion. He used to be carried into the church, they relate, in his extreme old age, when he could no longer preach, and simply say: "Little children, love one another." He had no faith that religion could prosper by mere orthodoxy, or by numbers, or by wealth, or by anything else than love. He put every one down as a deluded man and a hypocrite who showed hatred of his brother man, and then professed to love God. There is a great deal of abstract piety and sentimental love of God in the world, which is as purely imaginative and unreal, as the tenderness of a novel reader, who weeps over fictitious woes, and then turns hard-hearted from the sufferings of actual men and women.

Its Test.—13. How shall we know that love is real? How shall we be certified of the truth ourselves, and make the fact evident to others? There is often a confounding of selfish fondness with genuine love. Fondness is the mere delight which we take in another, who ministers in some way to our pleasure; while love is benevolence, or a purpose to promote the welfare and happiness of another, irrespective of our pleasure.

There is but one unfailing test of the disinterestedness of our state of mind; and that is, a willingness to suffer, in some way, for the good of the one we love. *Love which does not lead to any sacrifice is not genuine.* A love which costs nothing is too cheap to be of value. Therefore David, when Araunah proposed to give him the summit of Moriah for a place of worship, replied: "Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." There would have been no evidence in it of love to God. This seems not to have struck the man of whom the anecdote is told, that "he thanked God that he had attended Methodist meetings for forty years, and it had only cost him fifty cents!" A mother shows her love for her babe by what she does for it, at the expense of labor and money, of watching and weariness. This is the principle upon which Jesus fastens, when he points to the evidence of his own love for his disciples. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." If love is evidenced by sacrifice, then its degree is manifested by the extent of the sacrifice; just as a purchaser shows his appreciation of the value of an article by the price which he is willing to pay for it. A man's life is his most valued possession, because the enjoyment of other things depends upon it. Ordinarily he will sacrifice everything else first. Job 2:4. Love can go no farther, then, than to be willing to lay down life in behalf of another. The heroic tales of all nations are full of allusions to this fact. Thus the Greeks tell of Damon, whose friend Pythias was condemned to death by the tyrant Dyonisius of Syracuse, and who, to let his friend go home and arrange his affairs, consented to take his place in prison, and be responsible with his own life for his appearance by the time of execution. Pythias was unexpectedly delayed till the time had almost expired, and Damon was hoping to be allowed to die in his place, when his friend returned. But the tyrant was so much impressed, that he allowed them both to live. And the Romans tell of Marcus Curtius, who loved his country so much, that when a great gulf opened in the forum, and it was declared that it could close only by a human sacrifice, he mounted his horse and rode in. This crowning act of love was what Jesus was about to perform, even as shortly before he had said: "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." chap. 10: 11, also 15. Before another day had passed, he would die upon the cross. This has been the proof of love that has melted the human heart ever since. Paul felt its power when he said of Christ: "Who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20), and "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." Eph. 5:2. John, too, cherished it in his heart, and wrote: "Hereby perceive we the love of God [or rather, of Christ], because he laid down his life for us." 1 John 3:16. And this was with that loving apostle an argument that we should follow the Master's example, even to that last act; for he adds: "And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." It may be asked whether Paul does not state a still higher test of love, when, in Rom. 5:6–8, he says: "Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good (a specially benevolent) man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Certainly he does; but Jesus stated the same principle exactly; only he applied it simply as a test between friends, regarding his disciples in that light for the time being; while Paul went back to the original condition of things as the world lay in its sin.

Its Proof.—14. But how shall the true friends of Christ be known? What is the Master's own test and standard of

judgment? Many seem not to raise the question, all-important though it be. How few strictly examine and judge themselves on this point. Ministers sometimes fail to press their hearers upon it. The Master makes it plain: "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Obedience is the one steady and trustworthy proof that we are his friends. He will not accept a professed faith instead of a hearty obedience. We must believe, and, therefore, obey. Repentance for past disobedience and a consecrated life are as truly a condition of salvation as is faith in the atonement. That is no true gospel which omits, or throws into the shade, the necessity of holiness; for the thing which God is especially aiming at is, to produce right character. The gospel is not antinomian, or against the law. Paul says that "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8: 3, 4. And how firm and pronounced Jesus was in warning men not to think they could be saved by calling themselves his, and trusting that somehow he would save them without obedience, may be seen by reading the solemn words at the close of the Sermon on the Mount, beginning: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. See Matt. 7: 21–27. He tells us that "many," however, will make that fatal mistake.

Its Reward.—15. Jesus emphasizes the word "friends," which he had just applied to his disciples. He used it advisedly, to mark their high calling. He had sometimes called them "servants," as in chap. 13: 13, 16; but he wishes them to know that this was not in the low and absolute sense, as though they were to render only a blind and abject obedience, as when a servant receives orders, but is given no reasons. "Henceforth," that is, after the Spirit should enlighten and inspire them, they were to rise above that condition, and be made acquainted with the real meaning of the gospel dispensation: "For, all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." This had been done in a way of initiation into the nature of the kingdom, though the full meaning of much that he had said remained to be developed to their apprehension by the Comforter. 14: 26; 16: 13–15. The time would come when they would none the less obey; but it would be in the spirit of freedom, and not of bondage; of loving, intelligent friendship, and not of servile ignorance.

Its Service. 16. Ecclesiastics mean by "ordaining" a man, that they set him apart to discharge the duties of a particular office in the church. The word itself means simply to appoint, to determine. Jesus tells us that his disciples have directly from him a spiritual ordination. Let us make sure that we understand and appreciate it. First, he reminds them that he was the starting-point of influence: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." This was true in the experience of the apostles; for Jesus had personally called them to his service, and to leave their ordinary employments. Matt. 4: 18–22; 10: 1–5. It is true, also, of the whole world, which God loved and gave his Son to save, in advance of any human love to him. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation of our sins." 1 John 4: 10. And surely all Christians, in view of the many ways in which God has sought them, by his providence and Spirit, can say, "We love him because he first loved us." 1 John 4: 19. Being thus called, the disciples of Jesus are told: "I have ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." No doubt this had a special emphasis and pertinence in the case of those immediately addressed. They were appointed as apostles to a noble mission in the world, and grandly they

performed it. The fruit borne was abundant, and it has, indeed, remained. They founded the Christian church more than eighteen centuries ago; which has never ceased to be, and which, to-day, is the mightiest agency in the world. It is equally true that every saint has his divine appointment to bear similar fruit. There is need of all labor, and room for all laborers. Nor is any effort lost. The fruit shall remain. This is alike the encouragement of the minister, the parent, and the Sunday-school teacher.

ITS PERILS. Jesus conceals no consequences of discipleship—the world will "hate" them. By "the world" he means those who live for earthly ends only. This word is used because sin has become universal on earth, and has wrought itself into organic arrangements, so as to have a kind of unity over against the kingdom of Christ. It represents the spirit of self, of sin, of rebellion, of resistance to Christ's office and work. Hence Jesus assures them that from the world's hatred of him they might know that it would hate them; as the two had a common likeness, and represented one aim and interest. There is an affinity and a repulsion of souls. Those who are consciously committed to a career of sin hate the characters of the righteous, and will persecute them personally, so far as circumstances will allow. Thus Satan hated Christ, and instigated Judas to betray him, and the Pharisees and rulers to murder him. And Satan is still opposing Christ. After the ascension of Jesus, the rulers persecuted the church at Jerusalem, and wherever Paul went, in his missionary labors, he met the most malignant opposition. For two centuries the church suffered from the wrath of Roman emperors, who were incensed at the uncompromising attitude of the Christians. Nor is true, spiritual religion popular now in the world. In pagan lands it is still openly persecuted, as also in many Roman Catholic countries; and even where it has exemption from violence it meets with ridicule and reproach. Let us understand, then, that it will cost us something to be faithful to Christ. He himself cautioned his disciples to count the cost when they began the service, that they might not be surprised or discouraged when the hour of trial came. But let us likewise remember that "if we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

Culled Blossoms.

1.—What sort of joy is that which is set before the Christian. The highest human felicity can not express it. It is not the joy of earth, but the joy of Christ himself—"that *my* joy might remain in you." Luke 1: 78, 79; John 14: 27; Rom. 8: 6; 14: 17; Phil. 4: 7; Col. 3: 15.

2.—It is a remarkable fact that in this last interview of Christ with his disciples, his command to them was not: "Continue to love me, and love me more," but: "Love ye one another as I have loved you." And this is the test of our love to God. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth my brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" 13: 34, 35; Eph. 5: 2; 1 Thess. 4: 9; 1 Pet. 4: 8; 1 John 3: 14–17, 23; 4: 7, 10, 20, 21; 5: 1.

3.—See what a progression there is for those that love God—"servants," "friends," "SONS," "HEIRS." "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he doth appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." John 1: 12; Rom. 8: 15, 18; 2 Cor. 4: 17; Gal. 3: 26; Eph. 1: 3–6; 1 John 3: 1, 2; Rev. 21: 7.

4.—"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The wonder of God's love is—that it was manifested for his enemies. "Herein," indeed, "is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Deut. 7: 6–8; Rom. 5: 7, 8, 10; 1 Pet. 3: 18; 1 John 3: 16; 4: 9, 10.

5.—Christ left to his disciples from the world a legacy of hate. Has his religion and the world become so near alike that all antagonism has ceased between them? We trow not. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world," and they will never cease their warfare. In some way or other a Christian, if he be faithful, will be apt to find out what is meant by the "world's hate." Luke 14: 27; John 15: 19–21; 16: 33; 17: 14; Eph. 6: 11–13; 1 Thess. 3: 3, 4; 2 Tim. 3: 12; Rev. 7: 14.

HYMN.

I am so glad that our Father in heaven
Tells of his love in the book he has given;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.

Though I forget him and wander away,
Kindly he follows wherever I stray;
Back to his dear loving arms would I flee,
When I remember that Jesus loves me.

BLACKBOARD.

By the LOVE of CHRIST
WE ARE MADE
GOD'S SERVANTS, FRIENDS, SONS, HEIRS.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

CHRIST'S LOVE TO US.—If we love any one do we like to see him sick, or in pain, or unhappy? You know that God loves us, and do you think he likes to see us unhappy? Hear what Christ says about it. (Read vrs. 11.) Whose joy did he want us to have? Can you think of having any joy that was greater than that which Christ had? How long was it to last? "To remain"—to stay with us always—all through this life and all through the life to come. Other joys do not last long, this is to last forever.

The Proof.—How can a man best show his love for a friend? (Read verse 13, and tell the story of Damon and Pythias, given in the Notes and Comments.) This for a friend—but Christ died for his enemies. (Read Rom. 5: 7, 8.) Christ's love is also proved by his calling us not servants, but "*friends*"—"Children of God" (Rom. 8: 16); "Heirs of God" (Rom. 8: 17); "Sons of God." 1 John 3: 1, 2. Emphasize especially the last part of last reference.)

OUR LOVE TO CHRIST.—How it should be manifest. 1.—By loving each other as Christ has loved us. 12. How much is that, and what will it lead us to do? 2.—By doing whatsoever Christ hath commanded. 14. What has he commanded? 3.—By bearing fruit. 16. What sort of fruit? 4.—By not doing the evil things that the world does. 18. What things should we not do?

MEMORY VERSES.

Jesus is the children's Saviour!
'Twas for them he shed his blood;
Died, that poor and needy sinners
Might be reconciled to God.
Dying Saviour!
Bearing thus our sinful load.

Jesus is the children's Saviour!
"Suffer them," he says, "to come,"
If they seek his face and favor,
They shall share his heavenly home,
Risen Saviour!
Never more from thee to roam.

BLACKBOARD.

CHRIST'S LOVE SHOWN BY
SUFFER LITTLE
CHILDREN TO COME
UNTO ME.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

THE meeting held at Farwell Hall was a pleasant episode of the meeting of the international lesson committee, in this city. Addresses were made by Drs. Hall, Randolph, and Vincent. Dr. Randolph gave a brief, but interesting account of the rise and progress of the international series, and closed with some happy and humorous remarks on the possibility of teaching denominational doctrines from this series of lessons. Dr. Hall drove straight for the point that the political and moral hope of the country depends upon the training of the children in the Sunday-school. Dr. Vincent referred to the happy influences that the series is exerting on the pastor, the teacher, and the denominations. He affirmed that the pastor, nowadays, noticing the hold that the lessons have upon the people, seeing the drift of their minds, and desiring to preach upon things that will really interest them, always preaches upon topics touched upon by these

lessons. Having, ourselves, knowledge of but very few, comparatively, who do this, we suspected him of being ironical. Concerning the denominations, he declared that by the joint study of the Word, each one is learning what part of its creed is true, and what part is false. And then he audaciously said that he did not suppose that he was violating any secret of the committee room in saying that, after a careful joint study, now, for several years, the committee had just found out that the Bible is a Methodist book!

IT was decidedly moist this year at Chautauqua. If puns were at all allowable, (but they are not, for the *Congregationalist* has interdicted them,)we should say that the place had hereafter better be called *Shout-aqua;* for there was both a good deal of shouting, and a good deal of water. It rained so much and so hard that a New York reporter telegraphed to his paper: "*It is raining at Chautauqua. The Jordan has overflowed its banks, Jericho is under water, the Dead Sea has sprung a-leak, and, look out for a flood!*" The prospect was so alarming that he took the first-boat that came along, hurried to New York, and, it is rumored, took refuge in the Tall Tower, from which elevation he is anxiously looking for a subsidence of the waters.

WHILE there we had an experience of the grip and grit of Sunday-school people that we shall not soon forget. It was our turn to make an address. Fifteen minutes after we commenced it began to rain. And we were left without an audience? Not a bit of it. With a heroism that overwhelmed us with grateful surprise, they stayed to the end. Those who had umbrellas lifted them; those who had not did not run. We hope that no one will suppose that we do not appreciate the obligations we are under to those dear people for *not* running, when we say that, after all, it was excessively funny. We could see a nose here, and an eye there, and a mouth somewhere else, and we talked to those nose and eye and mouth as faithfully as if we saw all of the faces to which each belonged. It is dreadfully inspiring to talk to a lot of umbrellas! Next time that we have to do it, we are going to practice first for a week on a field of mushrooms! Before the assembly was over Vincent got quite used to it, and with great unction used to address them as, "*My dear Umbrellas!*" We dared not be quite so familiar on so short an acquaintance.

As admirable a Sunday-school director as Vincent is, he made the mistake at Chautauqua of driving the people too hard. He gave them no opportunity of rest. From the six o'clock morning chimes to the ten o'clock bells at night, there was a constant,relentless succession of Bible services, normal classes, lectures, addresses, Hebrew classes, "conversations" blackboard exercises, kindergartens, etc., some of them requiring the very closest attention and hardest kind of study, until, when the welcome good-night chimes sounded, every one felt that his "poor, tired brain needed rest." One man wanted to know "if there had been any preparations made for a funeral," and when he was asked why, replied: "Well, I am afraid I am going to be taught to death." People went there for rest, as well as drill. And while it would have been much more a matter of reproach if too little instruction had been given, still it is matter for regret that those hard workers had no time for recreation, and found themselves pretty thoroughly exhausted, and possibly, a good deal unfit for the resumption of their usual duties, after the assembly was over. Next year, let the hours for recreation be as definitely fixed and as conscientiously observed as the hours of study.

A new witness, in the person of Rev. Geo. N. Marden, of Farmington, Me., has arisen to testify to the value of the Bible service. He has tried it now for four years, and, under its influence, the

church membership was increased from 199 to 408. He says, in regard to it, that if he could have but one service each Sunday for building up a people into Christian manhood, he is not certain but that he would prefer fifteen minutes preaching at the end of such a service to twenty-five at any other time. We quote what he says concerning the plan, and its adoption:

"During the first six years of my ministry," he writes, "I had practically no part nor lot in the Sunday-school. Of course, I smiled upon it, as all ministers do, and said in my heart: 'God bless them.' But the more excellent way was not open, and I kept on in the old routine. Shortly after entering my present parish, leading and representative members of the church and congregation proposed a modification of the Sabbath services. The result was the adoption of what is called the Bible service in place of Sabbath forenoon preaching service. Its nucleus was the Sunday-school. It embraces: 1. Devotional exercises, conducted mainly by the pastor. 2. Study of a uniform portion of the Word of God, in classes under eighteen teachers, including the pastor. 3. A short unwritten sermon or address by the pastor, summing up the lesson, and applying its main spiritual truths."

As our readers know, we do not share in the belief that the majority of Sunday-school hymns and songs are mere rhyming and jingling nonsense. Denunciations of that kind are a cheap way of getting a reputation for critical observation. But, lately, we have had occasion to pronounce the best of the song books failures in two essential particulars. We have carefully examined about a dozen of the most excellent, and could find in them no hymns in which humility was inculcated. There were plenty of bright, lively, inspiring, soldier-like hymns, whose tendency is to make one buoyant and self-reliant, but nothing that would tend to cultivate the grace of humility. And that, we believe, was one of the graces which the Saviour most assiduously tried to cultivate. The other sort of hymns we failed to find were those expressive of the office, power, and comfort of the Holy Ghost. The two hymns which the church have so long sung were in some of them; but Sunday-school hymnology has added nothing of its own upon this topic, and the most of the song-book makers seem not to "have even so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

THE 17th and 18th days of this month, be it remembered, are days that are set aside for prayer for Sunday-schools. We hope that superintendents each year will make more and more of this time of united supplication for the presence and aid of the Holy Ghost in bringing the children to the Saviour. We may be sure that the results will show how much or how little fervency and faith were shown during these days of prayer. The recommendations made by the committee, are as follows:

That on Sunday morning, October 17th, between seven and eight, all teachers should engage in private prayer for God's blessing on their labors.

That the opening of school should be preceded by the teachers meeting together for prayer.

That the ordinary routine of each school should be varied by the children being gathered for devotional exercises, interspersed with appropriate addresses. To this meeting the parents of the scholars might be invited.

That at some time during the evening the teachers should meet to implore divine help and guidance.

That on Monday morning, October 18th, between seven and eight, all teachers should again bring their scholars in prayer before God.

That in the course of the day the female teachers of each school should hold a meeting for prayer.

That in the evening each church or congregation should be invited to hold a special prayer-meeting, at which the welfare of the Sunday-school should form the theme of prayers and addresses.

No one is fit to be a Sunday-school teacher that has fits—fits of being absent, fits only of punctuality, mere fits of study, fits of visiting his scholars, with long intervals between. The scholars are sure to have fits also—principally fits of staying away. The most fitting thing that such teachers can do is to resign.

THE Sunday-school booksellers in the different cities have entered into an agreement to adhere to the same prices, and give only the same discounts. In this they seem justifiable, for, in their

competitive bidding for purchasers, many have found their business almost an unprofitable enterprise. But while we think their action is defensible, still we think it is calculated to give deeper growth to the root of the difficulty. The trouble is that the prices of all books, and specially of Sabbath-school books, are extortionately high. If the publishers, now, would be satisfied with a reasonable profit upon their publications, the customers would have no cause to complain. As it is, the booksellers have closed in a protecting, solid phalanx around the publishers, leaving no method open of bringing them to lower and more reasonable terms.

MOST an odd thing appeared in one of our Sunday-school exchanges. In a column were three or four items which were taken without credit from this magazine. This we were not surprised at, for such piracy is frequently indulged in. But what transfixed us was that it should head the column with the aphorism: "*Ingratitude is treason to mankind.*" But, then, no doctrine is good for anything unless it is well lived up to!

ONE of the most significant things that have lately happened was the universal sorrow that was manifested on the death of Hans Christian Andersen. He held no princely title, was no learned scientist, was no great reformer. He was simply a poet and a children's story-teller. And yet few people have been known and loved so widely and so well. When he reached his seventieth birthday there came to him letters and telegrams and gifts from all quarters of the globe. Among the latter, we are glad now to remember, were beautiful volumes illustrative of America, from the children of this country. And when the dear Dane died, four months afterward, the children of two hemispheres felt that they had lost a friend. Editorial eulogies of his simple life have appeared in every paper and periodical of any note throughout the land. They have shown that love outranks greatness, and demands and wins a better tribute from our hearts. The Press Association of Berlin, in laying their floral wreath upon his coffin, accompanied it with a declaration which expressed the universal judgment concerning him: "Thou art not dead," they said, "though thine eyes are closed. In children's hearts thou shalt live forever." By his beautiful life of love the humble story-teller won two immortalities.

WHILE writing the lesson upon "Many Mansions," in speaking of being with the Saviour as ultimately to be the main attraction of heaven for us all, if we had seen it then we should certainly have inserted the following beautiful verse of Rutherford's. As it is we feel as if we must give it a place here, knowing that a good many will use and thank us for it:

> The bride eyes not her garments,
> But her dear bridegroom's face;
> I would not gaze on glory,
> But on the King of grace—
> Not on the crown he giveth,
> But on his pierced hands;
> For glory ever dwelleth
> In Immanuel's land.

SOON after the Illinois State Sabbath School Association there appeared in the *Central Christian Advocate* a well deserved criticism on the devotional character of that assemblage. It commended the harmony that was manifest and the excellence of the addresses, but with sorrow referred to the fact that when one was leading in prayer many heads were not bowed, and none knelt. "Here," it said, "two brothers talk in subdued tones about the business next to be done; over there a brother is reading a hymn; on the platform a man gazes out over the audience, watching the late comers; and at the Secretary's table a friend writes away all unconscious of his surroundings." As this lack of reverence and devotional spirit was shown by those quite prominent in the management, the effect was quite observable in a like indifference upon

the part of the audience. All meeting together for purposes of study will be worse than useless that makes a mockery of prayer—all cultivation of means and methods will amount to nothing if there is not the spirit of prayer to bring down, and vitalize them with, the Holy Ghost.

IN the lesson on "Jesus at Bethesda" our readers were put into possession of the facts which indicate that the fourth verse of the fifth chapter of John is spurious. A writer in the *Standard* is horrified at the *Baptist Teacher* for daring, like ourselves, to state the reasons for doubting the genuineness of this portion of the sacred text. He declares that if he can not believe *all* that is in the Bible he can not believe *anything* that is in it, and that if this verse is spurious all the rest of the narrative must be so. It is an absurd position to take. It is very much as if an ardent enthusiast of painting sat before one of the master-pieces, and an artist, seeing a speck of mud on the nose of the Madonna, was just going deftly to remove it with a knife, when he was stopped by the worshiper's saying: "Don't remove that. If I can't believe in that speck of mud I can't believe in anything!

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

"A COUNTRY pastor" complains to the *Sabbath School Monthly* in this wise: "I tire of attending conventions where 'distinguished speakers' from abroad are advertised, who are conspicuous only for their absence, and are beyond expecting a Sabbath-school programme to be carried out as advertised." It will be better to depend on local talent than to announce as certain a "distinguished speaker," who only says: "Perhaps I'll come."——In the township of Elmwood, in this State, matters have been whittled down to a pretty fine point. It was said there that they did not want for a superintendent "a tardy man, a sloven, a livery-stable keeper, or a druggist." That is a heavy dose for the last mentioned class to take.——The *Congregationalist* thinks that as much care should be taken in the selection of assistant superintendent as in the choice of the superintendent himself. The school may be subjected to a great deal of annoyance and suffer considerable demoralization under an incompetent assistant in case of the absence or death of the superintendent. A certain bit of history in our nation illustrates this point admirably.——Rev. David Swing has this to say of the political influence of the Sunday-school: "All the Sundays of an early life in a cheerful, heavenly Sunday-school, enjoyed by all the children of the United States, would, in one generation, mold the political future more than all the orators and all the libraries can mold it in many times as many years." There is no doubt that the conscientious, un-repeating, anti-ballot-box-stuffing, *honest* voter is to come from the Sabbath-school.——A writer in the *Western Christian Advocate* declares that parents are so unconcerned about the religious culture of their children that they are perhaps doing more to keep their children out of the Sabbath-school than all other agencies combined." Certain it is that their interest in the school is not as apparent as it might be. Mormonism might be taught there and a large portion of them know nothing about it. There is nothing that the teacher has to struggle with that is so discouraging as indifference on the part of the parents.——*The Christian at Work* says of a teacher who goes to see her scholars only when they are sick: "Her visits are open to the objection that they are too much like doses

of medicine."———Wm. F. Sherwin, the musical composer, speaking of his early Sunday-school recollections says: "The pastor of my boyhood seemed to me like two hundred and fifty pounds of general judgment." That, then, is the reason why Vincent calls him "my melancholy friend."———In the Lutheran Sunday School Convention Walter Gebhart, of Dayton, O., remarked: "We are too apt to look upon children as only valuable on account of what they may become, and therefore may unconsciously treat them as of little present worth. We, as men and women, resent nothing quicker than this, and they are not one whit behind us in their perception, feelings, or their action. Treat them then as worthy of the very best you can give, and you may be surprised as well as gratified at the appreciation they will manifest." That is much better than to do as a certain minister did who prayed in the very presence of the children of a family, that God would keep them "through their foolish childhood and their still more foolish youth." By this means he apprised them of the fact that nothing good could be expected of them until they had come to maturity. We would that he were alone in that belief. ———A neighbor of ours thinks that when the children hear the parents criticise the minister, his private character, his pulpit performances, and his "short-comings" generally, it is not a school where they learn reverence for the pulpit or obtain a relish for the services of the sanctuary.———Referring to the exclusion of the Bible from public schools, Bishop Cummins says: "As we have reached a period in our history when religion can not be taught in our public schools, the Sunday-school must become the chief evangelist of American children." *With* the co-operation of the pulpit, we trust.———The Methodist presiding elder of the Fall River (Mass.) district declares this to be an impending danger in his field: "If great care is not taken we shall soon have the strange spectacle before us of a generation well versed in the Word of God, but who have heard little if any preaching. Who will teach us how to remedy this evil?" Some seem to think that the way to do that is to denounce the Sunday-school.———Said an exasperated old lady in the witness-box," who had been probed and probed with questions on a subject on which she was entirely ignorant: "Gracious, marcy me! How can I tell anything about anything that I don't know anything about!" Those teachers who have often tried the experiment perhaps can answer.

Sunday School Work.

Ohio sets the example in promptness for all the other states to follow. Already she has the programme of her next State Convention, June 6–8, 1876, arranged and printed. President Nichols and Secretary Cowden do not allow such matters to go until the last moment. As a result it is said that the speakers, having so long a time for preparation, generally hit the mark, and the subjects are discussed in such a way as to make one feel that it is worth while to attend. Few men are capable of hitting the bull's-eye in off-hand firing. Among the topics is this one that is somewhat unfamiliar in Sunday-school discussions. "The Relation of the Pen to the Sabbath School." In "Religious Development," after conversion, they have selected another which covers one of the most important points ever touched upon in any Sabbath-school convention.———At Chautauqua President Grant was presented by Dr. Vincent with two Bibles, one a Bagster and the other the American Tract Society's

"Teacher's Bible"—one for himself and the other for the "lady of the White House." In the comments that have been made about this our exchanges have failed to recognize the fact that what made Grant's visit to the Assembly and the gift to him appropriate was that Vincent had formerly been the President's pastor. As usual the President was very sparing of words. In the Executive Chair we have fully exhibited all the effective qualities of "a silent superintendent."——On the 12th of next month the Friends will hold their "First Day" School Conference in Philadelphia.——Once each month the First Presbyterian Church at Nashville has decided to hold a Sunday-school meeting at which the superintendent and teachers are to report the progress of the classes and of the children, the interest manifested by them in matters of religion, and discuss topics of interest pertaining to the Sabbath-school and the church. It needs no prophet's vision to see that that church is likely to become thoroughly interested in its Sunday-school and aflame for the religious welfare of its children.——The first Sabbath-school organized in Louisville, Ky., was started in 1818 in the First Presbyterian church, between Market and Jefferson streets. It was a "Union" school, and all who became teachers paid an annual fee of one dollar for its support.——The largest Sunday-school in the Southern Presbyterian church is said to be that of the First Church at Nashville. It has 715 scholars and 87 teachers.——Rev. John McCullagh, whose face lately appeared in the *Sunday School Times*, and who, for the last thirty years has been a missionary of the American Sunday School Union in the South, has organized 10,161 new Sabbath-schools, and mustered into the Sunday-school army 67,443 teachers and 581,298 scholars. Out of those schools have grown 830 churches having 52,000 communicants. When he rests from his labors how increasingly his works will "follow" him!——The Reformed Church Synod have *resolved:* "That the Heidelberg Catechism should be taught in all our Sunday-schools, and occupy a central and prominent position, and the scholars be required to commit it to memory and recite every Lord's day." Unquestionably there is a "Catechism Revival" in some of the denominations, in one case going so far as to supersede the Bible as the book for study. That example, of course, would find few imitators even among the most ardent advocates of the catechism. In that place, by the way, the attendance of scholars was remarkably small; and it is no reflection on the wisdom of teaching the catechism *with* the Bible to say that probably an exclusive catechetical diet had something to do with the paucity of numbers.——A welcome fact is that Ralph Wells is writing tracts for Sunday-school teachers. The first one is already out, and is a little paper book of thirty-six pages. It is on the subject which lies nearest the heart of its author: "The Teacher's Weapon, and How to Use it." "Sketches from a Superintendent's Log" is the next one announced."——Rev. J. W. M. Williams, D. D., of Baltimore, preaches a short, excellent, little sermon to the children every Sunday morning, and, afterwards, it is published in the paper published by the school and called *Our Own*. It does not take more than two minutes to preach this sermon, but it gives the children an interest in something beside the benediction.——Another thing about Ohio. It is determined to have a place for its State Sunday School Association in the coming Centennial exhibition. And not only that, but it is resolved to have the *first* place for "the extent and efficiency of work done and results obtained." Fair notice, this, for the other states. We hope that at that time it will be able to show more than 314,835 children in the Sabbath-school as against 676,873 out of it.——Virginia is no longer to remain lagging behind in Sunday-school work. At a meeting at Richmond it was resolved "to enter into a more intimate

relation with the International Sunday-School Union of the United States and Canada," and the first State Convention is to meet at the same place on the 6th of this month.———Plainfield, N. J., is getting more than its share of Sunday-school notables. Rev. Robert Lowry has resigned the chair of rhetoric in Lewisburg (Pa.) University, and has taken up his residence at Plainfield. What his plans are we do not know, but, as the *Baptist Teacher* remarks, "He is bound to make music wherever he goes."

Foreign.

In England they have a "Children's Special Service Mission," whose object it is to hold special religious services for children. Last year such services were held in 175 different towns. Well, if the pastors continue to neglect preaching to children in this country, perhaps such a society will be necessary here.———It was stated by Rev. John Kilner, Missionary to Ceylon, before the English Wesleyan Conference that thirty or forty "Moody and Sankey hymns" had been translated into Tamil, and were now among the favorite songs of Ceylon. At the request of the Assemblage he sang "Hold the Fort" in Tamil. The words, of course, were twisted out of all recognition, but the tune went all straight.——— Dr. Manning, of Somersetshire, affirms that he is the superintendent of the oldest Sunday-school in the world. It was established in 1784, and in it he has a teacher nearly ninety-five years old, who for over eighty years has been a teacher in that one school. He claims the *oldest*, it will be noticed—not the first. We can antedate the organization of his Sunday-school in this country by Ludwig Hacker's forty-four years. But, then, that is not now living.———In Liverpool the School Board have voted that the pupils in its school must pass an examination in the Holy Scriptures. They have not learned there that they must expel that book because some people have scruples about letting their children study it. ———Dr. McAuslane, of London, says in the London *Sunday School Chronicle:* "If a shepherd were to be utterly heedless about the lambs, where, in a little while, would be his sheep? And, if there be a pastor who practically ignores his Sunday-school, we should not be at all surprised to learn that he has few in his church and congregation."——— That paper, in relation to the sort of books that should be read by the young sensibly says: "Another characteristic to be avoided is that of precocious piety —not the being pious too young, that is impossible, but the Christlike ceasing to be childlike. Such children are held up by some writers as the highest types of childhood, and they are represented as continually dreaming about the joys of heaven instead of cheerfully devoting themselves to the duties of earth, or vaporing about the life to come instead of making the life that is a preparation for it."——— The monument to John Bunyan, which was erected in 1862, by public subscription, in Bunhill Fields, has received considerable injury, and appears to be crumbling away. If it is found to be too difficult on that side of the water to keep it in repair, let us know on this, and thousands of little ones who have followed "*Pilgrim's Progress*" will be glad of the privilege of showing their gratitude to its author by contributing to perpetuate—not his memory, for there would be no need of that—but the token of his last resting-place.——— At Retzeburg, Germany, a nobleman—governor of the province, too—teaches one Sunday-school class while his man-servant teaches another. At Schwerin a lady of title is superintendent of a school.———In Konigsburg, Prussia, when they want to hold a union

meeting of all the scholars there is such a prejudice against the term "Sunday-school" that they call it "the children's religious service," and then the people turn out without scruple. It reminds us of the deacon who would not have the ungodly "fiddle" about his house, but admitted the "violin," and closed his eyes in rapture at hearing it play "Old Hundred."———There are eighteen to twenty teachers' meetings in Paris—an average of one to every four schools. A better proportion than many cities hereaway can show.———In southeastern France a Sunday-school convention has been held, at which twenty-eight ministers and a goodly number of delegates put in an appearance.———Berne has the largest Sunday-school in Switzerland. It has 600 scholars and 180 teachers—not an average of four scholars to a class. "Thorough" must be the word. A Mr. Barbey, a retired merchant, devotes his time and gives freely of his wealth to advance the Sunday-school cause. Next year they adopt the International Lessons.———Fourteen Sunday-schools united in the "Jubilee Sunday School Celebration" at Oahu, in the Sandwich Islands, and King Kalakaua, it is said, made a good speech there. He said that he still possesses the prize which, as a boy, was given him by Mr. Damon, the superintendent, then, of the Sunday-school of "Bethel Church," and remembered some of the verses he there committed to memory. One of them was: "Give no place to the devil." It is a pity that some other kings had not early learned that.

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—At South Bend, Ind., Rev. H. M. Morey encourages the older scholars to attend the teachers' meeting, not merely to look on, but to take part, and so become themselves prepared to teach. In this way he not only ensures that his teachers shall be prepared for next Sunday's lesson, but is training a corps of young teachers who will do faithful work in time to come. And, besides, if any regular teacher should happen to fail, he can lay his hand on some one whom he knows is prepared, instead of taking up with some complaisant, but unprepared looker-on.

—John E. Miller does not believe in always adhering to one method of review. On review day of the last quarter of the Old Testament lessons he turned the tables, and, instead of questioning the scholars, asked different teachers to give the history of the people about whom the school had been studying. When one had covered the period desired, he was interrupted and another asked to take up the thread where he dropped it, and so it was continued, until in about fifteen minutes a general view—*re*-view—of the history of the Israelites, so far as had been studied, was presented. A few questions then brought out the most prominent truths taught by the lessons, and, it is said, that the children rather liked this catechising of their teachers.

—In the Grove Street Congregational Church, of East Orange, N. J., a printed list of the regular services is tacked up in each pew, and among them are to be found the Sunday-school session and the Teachers' Meeting. That appears as if that church really believed in those agencies.

—In nineteen years the Sabbath School Missionary Association of the 14th street Presbyterian Church, of the City of New York, has contributed

$17,343.63 to the cause of missions. As the school does not represent much wealth, and the church is composed of people only in moderate circumstances, it is interesting to note the secret of its liberality. Its own explanation of it is founded on the fact that it early, understandingly, and fully adopted the following principles of action:

I. Every one should aid in the religious education of the destitute. Rom. 10: 15; 1 Tim. 6: 18; Acts 20: 35.

II. Each should conscientiously decide the amount of his gifts according to his ability, and make *regular* contributions. 2 Cor. 8: 11; 9: 7; 1 Cor. 16: 2.

III. A regular Sabbath gift, rightly given, becomes a memorial of God's blessings through the week past, and a constant reminder of the entire consecration of heart and life that is the Christian's privilege and duty. 1 Chr. 16: 29; Deut. 26: 5, 10; Acts 10: 31.

—Once every month at Bethany Mission, Philadelphia, is held a "Parents' and Children's Meeting," at which some Bible topic is discussed by speakers appointed for that purpose. They are always largely attended. The object is instruction, not exhortation, as may be seen by the following list of subjects for the year:

January,	Buildings of the Bible.
February,	Mechanics of the Bible.
March,	Merchants of the Bible.
April,	Mariners of the Bible.
May,	Farmers of the Bible.
June,	Shepherds of the Bible.
July,	Prophets of the Bible.
August,	Apostles of the Bible.
September,	Preachers of the Bible.
October,	Singers of the Bible.
November,	Books of the Bible.
December,	Homes of the Bible.

—It is getting so far along now into the fall that a word of suggestion relative to the teachers' meeting will come into place just here. Cold weather is apt to operate disastrously upon them. Therefore, see that the rooms in which they are held are warm, bright, and cheerful. If the only possible place in the church for holding them is a damp, chilly, uncomfortable room, impossible to be made warm and attractive, engage the best private house you can. If no one wants to entertain the meeting all winter—and few would want to do that—it can "board around," and find a hospitable welcome in that way every week. And this latter course might end in getting quite a number of families interested in Bible study that before never thought of it. And, further, *don't* let the ladies have to come and go home alone through the rain and the snow-drifts. A few experiences of helpless floundering in the mud or snow on dark nights are enough to throw a damper on the warmest zeal. A lantern and an escort would lighten and enliven matters wonderfully.

—Very few scholars know how to use a reference Bible. It is important that they should learn how. First get them out of the idea that all they have to do is to hunt up the answers to the questions on their lesson paper. Stimulate them to learn *all* they can about the lesson from every source that is open to them. Suggest that if they will look out all the references they will learn some things not given in the lesson paper. Then go through one lesson with them, so that they will have a practical example of the method and results of such work. On succeeding Sundays question them to see what each has learned from the references. Scholars who do this will, after awhile, begin to bring everything to the Bible as a test, and it will become a loved and familiar book.

—W. R. Burnham, of Norwich, Conn., diligently follows up his absentees. It really is not comfortable often to be away from his school after one is once a member of it. He has two tasteful circulars, one designed to be sent to one absent for the last session only, and the other for one away for a greater length of time. We here print both of them:

SUNDAY EVE.,.....187

My Dear Scholar:

I was very sorry to see your place vacant in our session of school to-day. I trust your detention was unavoidable, and not from any lack of interest, or love for the school. Please remember that the absence of even one scholar helps to lessen the

efficiency of the service. May I not hope to see you in your accustomed seat next Sabbath, and regularly on each Sabbath thereafter.

Sincerely your friend,
W. R. BURNHAM, Supt.

NORWICH, CONN.,.....187

My Dear Scholar:

Your continued absence from our loved school is an occasion of no little anxiety to your Superintendent.

I feel confident you would not allow any slight hindrance to debar you from the privileges of our Bible service, and shall expect, very soon, to see you in your accustomed place again.

If you are ill send me word that I may call upon you.

I feel a great desire to have all members of our school prompt and regular in their attendance, both for their individual welfare, and for the welfare of the school.

Praying for the blessing of the Master to attend you, I am Sincerely your friend,
W. R. BURNHAM, Supt.

LITERATURE.

FEW men have shown such an adaptation for popularly presenting biblical, theological, and ecclesiastical subjects as Rev. Lyman Abbott. He has the happy faculty of simplifying and illuminating the topics upon which he treats. His statements are clear—so clear that it is a pleasure to read them; he writes in no controversial spirit, and he usually manifests a rare tact and good judgment. When the announcement was made that he was to write a commentary on the New Testament we were interested at once, but we have been more interested in the commentary itself. The first volume, which includes Matthew and Mark, has come to hand. It contains an introduction to the study of the new Testament which in itself is a valuable help. In that he treats upon the "Nature of the New Testament," "Origin and Authority," "Evidences of Inspiration," "Limits of Inspiration," "New Testament Canon," "The Text," "Our English Version," "Principles of Interpretation," "Relation of the Gospels to each other," "Origin of the Gospels," "Harmony of the Gospels," and "Life of Christ." There is plenty of good "Normal Class" material and information in this introduction. The comments upon the text have more than fulfilled our high expectations of them. They are scholarly, but terse and to the point, the author seeming intuitively to grasp that which is most needed by the people. Possibly some other commentary may yet be published better for common use than this, but we are free to say that so far it seems to be the best, and we predict that the public will so decide. The publishers have well supplemented Mr. Abbott's work by giving a good broad page, clear print, and excellent binding. New York and Chicago: A. S. Barnes & Co.

IN the *Half-Hour Recreations in Popular Science* we have observations on "The Transmission of Sound by the Atmosphere," by Tyndall, and a paper on "Gigantic Cuttle Fish," by W. Saville Kent. In the similar series of *Half-Hour Recreations in Natural History* is a contribution on "Insects of the Pond and Stream," by A. S. Packard, Jr. We do not know that our readers are aware of the fact that these two series are issued monthly and can be subscribed for by the year. So far they have been excellent and well worth their subscription price. Single number, 25c.; yearly, $2.50. Boston: Estes & Lauriat.

UNDER the title of *Shadowy Hand* Rev. Henry Morgan gives us his autobiography. His mother's hand laid in blessing upon his head when a child is the "shadowy hand" that gives the title to the book. All autobiographies are egotisms — gentle egotisms some of them may be, but nevertheless they are egotisms. Very rarely indeed, can they be written without offending good taste. And this very often so offends. Mr. Morgan is a strong, original sort of character, saying many good things and some very bad ones — often really eloquent and sometimes very coarse. The first part of the volume gives a history of his early struggles, which sometimes is quite touching. The latter part is devoted to a laudation of his later successes, quotations from those papers which have praised his performances, and denunciations of those who have criticised this book. Boston: Rev. Henry Morgan.

TWO excellent little pamphlets, entitled *Care of the Sick*, and *Accidents, Emergencies, and Poisons* are issued gratis to its patrons by the Mutual Life Insurance Co., of New York. For want of a knowledge of the plain, practical directions given in these two little books many lives have been needlessly sacrificed. Every family ought to have and ought to *study* some such books as these.

THE house of Oliver Ditson & Co., Boston, issue *German Four-Part Songs*, edited by N. H. Allen. The songs are for mixed voices, and have English words. We still look toward Germany for our best music. But the Germans think more of the music than they do of the words which are made to keep company with it. So in this instance, as in others, we have gems of song, but a poor setting of words for them. To lovers of music that may not matter so very much. Chicago: Lyon & Healy.

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THE HOLY COMFORTER.

BY REV. WASHINGTON GLADDEN.

WHATEVER notion of the Trinity men may hold, or whatever philosophy of the divine existence they may teach, it is necessary in all genuine Christian experience that God should be worshiped under these three characters: first, as the Supreme Ruler, "the Father of an Infinite Majesty;" second, as the Elder Brother, the incarnate and manifested Deity; thirdly, as The Comforter, the indwelling Power and Life. It is impossible that right relations with God should be established and maintained except as these three truths concerning his nature are comprehended. And when these truths are heartily believed and appropriated, the foundation of a true religious life is laid; no matter what structural form the theology may take.

Of these revelations of God the one that is nearest to experience and furthest from comprehension is that of God the Holy Ghost. Probably this very term, which has always stood in our Trinitarian formularies of faith, is partly responsible for the vagueness of men's ideas concerning the Spirit of God. Ghosts, even to those who believe in them, are but dim, impalpable existences; and intelligent persons in these days do not believe in them. Our children never hear of them except through the surreptitious teachings of nursery maids; and when they bring to us the disturbing revelation we immediately assure them with all vehemence that ghosts are only creatures of imagination; that nothing can be more unreal; that only ignorant people are afraid of ghosts. The discredit which we thus throw upon the word reaches also, in the minds of thoughtless persons, to the term in which is shadowed forth the mystery of the divine indwelling, so that the Holy Ghost becomes to them an imaginary and unreal personage. It is not necessary that the term should be dropped, but it is necessary, in all our instruction of children, that the misconception to which it is liable to give use should be guarded against.

Of course it is not possible to make this doctrine of the divine indwelling entirely plain to the minds of young children, though it may be that they can come as near as their elders to the comprehension of it. How it is that God dwells in us, unfolding his truth to our thought, helping us in our infirmities, comforting us in our sorrows, is more than any of us will ever know. If the

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mystery could be fathomed and charted by our logic it would cease to be a mystery. If we did not know that the operations of God upon the hearts of men were too deep and too subtle to be traced by our philosophy, there would be little hope or comfort for us. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." If we were not sure that "He is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask *or think*," we might well despair. To say that we can not understand *how* God can do this or that for us; how he can interpose in our behalf when Nature with her constant forces threatens us with calamity; how he can impart to us the graces of his Spirit, is to say but little. Over that impediment our faith mounts easily. Of course we can not understand it; but God's power to bless us is not limited to our understanding.

But though the influences of God's Spirit are to our logic inscrutable, to our experience they are most real and most precious. The story of the Christian's life, hid though his life is, with Christ in God, is by no means a ghost story. Of nothing is the faithful believer more sure than that God is working in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. Though the work all goes on beneath the consciousness, the results of it are revealed in consciousness, and after many days of trust and obedience, he is able to say with Paul, "I know" not only *in* whom, but "WHOM I have believed."

In order that this truth may be made real to children it is necessary to avoid in our instruction of them, the tri-theistic heresy, and strongly to insist upon the truth that the Holy Spirit is God, and that there is but one God; that the same Being who spoke to Adam in the garden, who wrestled with Jacob at Peniel, who raised the dead boy to life at the city of Nain, who wept by the grave of Lazarus, who agonized in Gethsemane, and suffered on Calvary is whispering in their hearts, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. Any form of statement which dissociates the persons of the Trinity or even broadly distinguishes between them in their work is to be avoided. Any theory which makes God the Father just, and God the Son merciful, which conveys the impression that Christ *was once* in the world, but that now he has gone away, and that the Holy Spirit is here in his stead; which applies the methods of modern industry to the divine operations, and carefully divides the work of salvation into three departments, presided over by three distinct individuals, is to be diligently avoided. That there is danger of a blinding confusion in this matter is only too apparent. One of the most prominent pastors in New England expressed the opinion not long ago in a ministers' meeting that the Holy Spirit is sometimes grieved because men attribute to Christ the work which belongs to him! That there is between the persons of the Trinity a difference which may even amount to jealousy is a most pestilent heresy. I wish that it were not so prevalent as to be dangerous.

Out of the same false theory of the divine existence grows the notion which I often heard advanced when I was a Sunday-school scholar, that the Holy Spirit was never in the world before the day of Pentecost, and that therefore not even Christ's disciples were converted until that day. That Christ, of himself, had no power to convert men, but that the work of salvation from sin must wait until the dispensation of the Spirit should begin in the upper room at Jerusalem, is a deduction from the trigonometrical doctrine of God, which by some trained and many untrained teachers of religion is yet held and taught. From this bewildering doctrine we must keep as far as we can in our Sunday-school instructions, taking care that by our enforcement of the three-fold nature of God we do not obscure the fact of his unity. Let the children understand that "the Lord (Christ) is that Spirit" of whom we speak to them; that when Jesus said that the Comforter should come, he meant just the same as when

he said "I will not leave you orphans; *I* will come to you!" If, then, they desire to know what manner of person this divine Spirit is, who day and night tarries near them, who speaks in their hearts of things unseen and eternal, who takes of the things of Christ that they learn in the Sunday-school and makes them plain to their understanding, let them read the New Testament; for the same Being who, in the form of a man, walked and talked with man nineteen centuries ago, now, without any form that we can see, abides with us to lead us toward truth, and aid us in all our struggles with sin. Let them know that the Holy Spirit is no mere shadowy influence, but a personal presence; that he is a tender, sympathizing friend, who, though he searches our hearts and knows every secret thought, pities us, and loves us, and rejoices to help us in our efforts to lead better lives; and that he is just as full of compassion for the weak and sinful now as he was while he was in the flesh. Such a manner of dealing with this difficult subject will make the Holy Comforter a much more real person to them; and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who not only came to earth once for our redemption, but who abides here continually for our salvation, will be revealed to them in richer and larger terms.

Then impress upon their minds the truth that the good thoughts which come to them every day are breathed into their minds by the Spirit of the Lord, and that often when they are not thinking of him, he comes to them, and reminds them of duty or warns them of danger. Show them that just as really as Christ spoke to the multitudes on the mount of the beatitudes does the Spirit speak to them to-day; and that the desires after better life which often spring up in their hearts, and which they are inclined to dismiss as mere impulses, are begotten in them by the Spirit of all grace.

And if this is so, how great is the guilt of neglecting his counsel or rejecting his authority. Children read with a pitying wonder the stories in the New Testament of those whom Christ called to follow him, and who would not obey his call. Make them understand that it is the same voice which, in inarticulate whispers, pleads with them to repent and be saved, and that when they silence this voice and turn away to selfish pursuits and pleasures they are guilty of the very sin which the young man committed who heard the Master's word of command but would not obey it and went away sorrowful. All good impulses are of God; all noble aspirations are inspirations, and they who stifle the promptings of this divine monitor expose themselves to a fearful condemnation.

THE COMFORTER.

BY REV. W. H. DANIELS.

HERE is one of the divine mysteries. The Son of God tells his disciples that another distinct personal presence is yet to come to them from heaven; not in an open and visible manner like himself, but in such a way that, while the world could neither see nor know him, the disciples should feel his presence within their souls. This coming Comforter is to take the place of Christ as the source of help and instruction to his chosen followers, and indeed, is to do more for them in these ways than Christ himself had been able to do; while he, after a little while, is going back to heaven by way of the cross of Calvary, to look after their interests there, and to make arrangements for their coming to him by and by.

The Greek word here translated

"Comforter" has a wide significance and power. It means, one who is called to, or besought, or implored; and, as it is in time of distress that such cries are uttered, the idea easily follows, of, one who is called upon for help in trouble. Coming to their aid under such circumstances this other heavenly visitor would properly be called a Comforter; while the word "another" leads them to think what a comfort Christ has been.

The call in response to which the Comforter is to come is not the prayer of the disciples, but the prayer of their needs. Christ does not propose to wait till they are actually alone and helpless, and begin to long for some one to take the place of their absent Lord; before the prayer is thought of he is preparing the answer; their coming necessities are the only cry he needs to hear. He lights a promise and hangs it up in the darkest part of the path before they come to it. As Isaiah has it: "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." The Master sees his poor, forsaken, discouraged disciples, after his death—which event they would ignorantly regard as the end of all hope—alone, despised, mocked by their enemies as dupes and fools, upbraided by their friends as deceivers, and actually in danger of apostasy on the one hand and martyrdom on the other; and the sight leads him to tell them over and over and over again that he will not leave them comfortless, but will send just such a Comforter as he had been. 14: 26; 16: 7–16. This new Comforter, like himself, would come from the Father in heaven, would say the same things he had said, and would help them to remember and understand them; in a word, their dead Master, risen again and returned to heaven, would come back to them in still greater preciousness and helpfulness through the influence of the Holy Ghost. 14: 18.

They had done great things already, by his help and under his direction, but when he had finished his work of redemption, and the Holy Ghost had come, in his place and name they were to do still greater things. 14: 12, 26. Thus their increase of power was to be from the same cause as every other similar increase in all ages of the church, viz., they were, through the aid and comfort of the Holy Ghost, to have more of Christ. Now Christ was beside them, then he was to be in them. 14: 17; Gal. 2: 20.

It is a question for the curious, why it was necessary that Christ should return to heaven before the Comforter could come, and to such the following suggestions may, at least, furnish occasion for the further study of this divine mystery: If the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, is the divine person who was incarnated in the human nature of Jesus Christ—as may appear by referring to Matt. 1: 20; Luke 1: 35; John 1: 33, was it the divine purpose that it should be his *only* work, at this climax of redemption, to help the Lamb of God in his infinite task of bearing the sins of all mankind? If this were so it would help to explain the fact that the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of Christ." It might also throw a little light on that singular exclamation of Jesus during the agony of the cross. Perhaps it was necessary that the Holy Spirit should be excarnated from him in order that he should die—since deity is essentially immortal—and the human nature of the Son of man thus left alone, might well cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"!

The question may take this form: The Lamb of God was about to take upon himself the sins of all mankind; did he require the help of the Comforter in this infinite task to such a degree that all other inspirations must cease, for the time being? Another question: Was it the excarnation of the Holy Spirit which was the occasion of the death of Jesus Christ? Did our sins break his heart and crush out his life when the Holy Spirit had departed? Another question also arises. The great facts of the gospel, viz., the death, resurrection, and

ascension of the Saviour, were now about to transpire, whereby only could the gospel be complete: Was it necessary that the Holy Spirit should have these facts by means of which to work up the faith of the disciples to the degree required for doing those "greater things"? If so, their experience was to be a pattern for all subsequent Christian experience; for it is only by a spiritual appreciation of these ultimate facts of the gospel that believers have ever since been able to do any great things.

But passing all such inquiries, it seems a special proof of the compassion and tenderness of God that the divine Spirit should now be sent into the world in his peculiar office of the Comforter. The two great features of human existence are sin and sorrow; the atonement of Christ provides pardon for the one, and the help of the Holy Spirit is a remedy for the other.

No sooner has that bright cloud with the ascending Saviour in its center faded from the eyes of the wondering disciples than the presence of this other Comforter is manifest. St. Luke says (24: 51–53): "And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God." He had come back to them from the grave, and he had promised to come back to them from heaven. They no longer sought the living among the dead, or doubted whether Israel has been redeemed. The Messiah has come and gone, but instead of regretting him they are full of joy. Christ did not leave them comfortless a single hour.

And not alone, in some secret place, did they meet to rejoice over the finished work of Christ, but in the temple, where Pharisees could have rebuked their credulity, and Sadducees could have mocked at their sorrow, if their faces and behaviour had not revealed the presence of some great exultation of soul.

What makes these forsaken disciples so happy! Their master was crucified as a felon the other day; and now they say he is risen to heaven! But they have stopped working miracles, at any rate; all their great power seems to have disappeared; they are evidently in disgrace, and yet they shout, and praise God, and quote the prophecies as if they were the happiest men alive! Are they trying to put a good face on the disastrous outcome of their folly, or is there some further development to this wretched plot? Ask Peter or John about it and they reply: Our Master has indeed gone back to heaven, but we are not alone. He promised to send us another Comforter, and he has been as good as his word. The "fruits of the Spirit" are already ripening; the kingdom of God is here already, even "joy in the Holy Ghost."

Another comfort is the new understanding they began to have of the spiritual truths of the gospel. "Did not our hearts burn within us while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Is not this the Spirit of Truth who was to teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance? What a comfort, now that *He* is gone who used to be our wisdom, to hear, with the ears of our souls, the words of One who speaks in his name! Here are we, a handful of ignorant men, with a world to convert, a church to organize which is to outlast the ages, a new set of Scriptures to write, with learned Greece to laugh at us, and tyrannical Rome to cut off our heads if we make any mistakes on behalf of our Divine King; but *He* promised that we should be led into all truth. What comfort! We are blind — the Spirit will be eyes to us; our heads are empty — but we are to be filled with the Holy Ghost. We are just beginning to understand the Messiah; how sweetly this new Comforter testifies of him! Young Solomon did not need the spirit of wisdom half so much as we; his was a little kingdom compared with ours. We shall not have to go blundering

along like other priests and princes, making ourselves the laughing-stocks of the human race of the future. Our words, spoken as they are given to us, before kings and governors, shall stand in the wisdom of God, angels, and men. Another promise which was to be fulfilled in the coming of the Comforter was the gift of power—"power from on high." Power is the idol of weak souls, and the disciples were weak enough now to find great comfort in this promise. Like Sampson shorn, they were now like other men; no miracles doing, no devils fleeing at their word, but the rather, swarming thick about them, with all manner of temptations to doubt and fear. Perhaps they remembered their Lord's command: "Go teach all nations"; no doubt they dreamed of the "greater things" they were to do; therefore they waited in good comfort. Power was coming,—power sent from the Father at the intercession of the Son—and brought by the Holy Ghost; the power of the triune God, by which they should be able to do all things.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come this promise began to be fulfilled: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. The bright enthusiasm of a divine mission kindles in their souls; their words burn into the hearts of unbelievers; sinners are converted by the thousand. Peter and the rest are like a troop of arch-angels; they revel in this new endowment of power. Again their will is strong enough to cast out devils; miracles of healing are once more tingling at their finger ends; their tongues are capable of divine oratory; they speak to men as God does—to every man in his own language wherein he was born—and understand and answer questions just as God understands and answers all dialects of prayer. To preach Peter's sermon that day was a comfort, a power of joy, next to that which Christ himself shall feel when "he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." This is the power of Christ; power to move the world by his gospel; power to impart power; the energy which precipitates Christ upon a rebellious race to conquer it with love; the grip that seizes a run-away world and leads it back to heaven; the power of the Highest; the ultimate gift to human souls—save one.

It is good to be comforted with joy, and wisdom, and power, but it is better to be comforted with holiness; to be born again, of the Holy Ghost, is the greatest comfort of all. "Oh! if I could only go back and lead my life over again!" says the despairing penitent. "You may," says the Comforter. "You shall have a chance to begin again;" yes, you shall even be born again, and be born better: born with an inheritance of the divine nature instead of the evil human nature; born of the Spirit instead of the flesh. And when the penitent sinner hears that, and believes it, and feels himself a little child again, with a heart tender and docile, instead of that old stony heart, then he finds the help of the Holy Ghost in the way which makes him most the Comforter.

"That he may abide with you forever," says Christ. It shall not be with you as it must be with me; when you come to the cross, or the sword, or the stake, the Holy Ghost will not depart from you as he will from me. I must die like a lost sinner, forsaken of God, just as you would be in your death if I should not die for you; but when you die it shall be as saved sinners, crying not "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani," but whispering or shouting as you fall asleep: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God."

THE CŒNACULUM AND TOMB OF DAVID.

BY PROF. E. C. MITCHELL, BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, CHICAGO.

ON Mount Zion, outside the present wall of Jerusalem, about one hundred yards south of the "Gate of the prophet David," or Zion Gate, stands a remarkable cluster of buildings to which the name "Cœnaculum," or Supper Room has been attached, because for ages a certain chamber within the structure has been regarded as the "upper room," chosen by our Lord for the celebration of the last supper.

The illustration in this article is a correct representation of the buildings as they appear from the north-west, taken from a photograph. The slabs in the foreground cover graves in the public burial place. The enclosure at the right is the American cemetery, where the bodies of Dr. Dodge and Mrs. Thompson, missionaries of the American Board, and Prof. Fiske, of Amherst College, now lie buried. On the left are seen a group of Mohammedan houses, the dome-shaped roofs of which are so constructed on account of the scarcity of timber to support a flat ceiling. The higher dome, surmounted by a crescent, covers the alleged tomb of David. The extension of this building to the right as far as the main entrance contains the "upper room," or Cœnaculum. This apartment is in size about fifty feet by thirty, built of solid stone, the ceiling of which rests upon groined arches supported in the center by stone pillars. It is now devoid of furniture or ornament, excepting that at the east end is a small niche in the wall which is used at times as an altar to celebrate mass, and on the south side is a similar recess used by the Mohammedans as a *Mihrab*, or place toward which to direct their prayers, since Mecca lies southward from Jerusalem.

The tradition which fixes upon this locality as the place of the supper is certainly older than the days of Constantine. It is referred to by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the fourth century as the "upper chamber" of the apostles where they were said to be assembled on the day of Pentecost. Epiphanius, 368 A. D., speaks of it distinctly under the name of the Cœnaculum, as does also Adamnanus about A. D. 697, and a succession of Christian writers ever since. The evidence in favor of the *spot*, therefore, as identical with the one chosen by our Lord for the celebration of his last passover is very strong. Few traditional sites in Palestine are better authenticated. It is possible that the foundations and portions of the walls of the present building may

THE CŒNACULUM.

have stood there in the days of Christ. The superstructure was erected or restored with additions in the fourteenth century. Without doing great violence to historic truth, therefore, we may imagine ourselves as looking upon some of the stones which caught the echoes of the voice of Jesus as he comforted the sorrowing twelve with his last legacy of loving words. Here they partook of the paschal meal, and submitted in wondering silence to the washing of their feet. Here they received the emblems of his broken body. Here the great intercessory prayer went up for the appointed founders of his church, and for them who should believe on him through their word. Tradition asserts also that here the apostles met after the resurrection, when the Saviour showed them his wounds; that here he ate before them, and breathed on them that they might receive the Holy Ghost; that here Thomas was convinced, and Matthias was elected an apostle; that here the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, and the first converts were added to the church. It is related by Epiphanius that this building and a few others in its vicinity escaped destruction on the desolation by Titus, and that this chamber was the church of the faithful after their return from Pella. The same writer says, in reference to the Emperor Hadrian's journey in Palestine, which occurred early in the second century: "He found Jerusalem leveled with the ground, the temple itself destroyed and trodden under foot, save only a few houses, and a certain small Christian church which had been built upon that spot on which the disciples, after that the Saviour had ascended into heaven, assembled together in the Cœnaculum."

When we consider how many tender memories clustered around that supper room, and how many important incidents in the history of the infant church occurred in connection with it, we need not wonder that the spot was sacredly cherished and the knowledge of it retained more perfectly even than that of the temporary resting place of our Lord's body, or the scene of his crucifixion. Nor is it strange that so interesting a spot should in later years attract to itself other traditions for which pious enthusiasm would seek a local habitation. One of the earliest among them is that which locates here the "column of the scourging" or marble pillar to which our Lord was bound. At the beginning of the eighth century it came to be regarded as the spot where the Virgin Mary died, and the place of the martyrdom of Stephen. The latter fiction seems to have had its origin in the fact that some time in the fourth century the *supposed* bones of the martyr Stephen were temporarily deposited there.

Superstitions like these should not be allowed to throw discredit upon authenticated facts. Indiscriminate unbelief is as hostile to truth as blind credulity. Tradition has its place in the domain of history, and the careful scholar who has the material for investigation will find it sometimes reliable and often very helpful in getting at the truth.

We now come to notice another fact which gives to this cluster of buildings a profound historic interest. Aside from Christian traditions there is important historic evidence from Jewish and Old Testament authorities that these structures mark the burial place of the royal prophet David.

We learn from 1 Kings 2: 10 that David was buried "in the city of David," which, by the record in 2 Sam. 5: 7, 9, is defined to be Mount Zion. It appears, also, from the language of Nehemiah 3: 16–19, in his account of the rebuilding of the walls, that the tomb of David was situated on this part of Zion, and that it was recovered after the captivity. In the address of Peter to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, delivered perhaps on this very spot, he says: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day." Subsequent notices by

Josephus, Dio Cassius, Jerome, and others sufficiently establish the fact that it was in this locality that David was buried.

It is, however, a more difficult matter to determine just where his remains were deposited, and whether they still exist. In the building before us, beneath the crescent topped dome at the left, is a small but gorgeously furnished room, the ceiling of which is vaulted and the walls covered with a tiling of blue porcelain in floral figures. At the north side of the room stands a marble sarcophagus seven feet high and twelve feet long, covered with several thicknesses of rich silk carpeting, worked with gold thread in blue and crimson. This sarcophagus is believed by the Mohammedans to contain the embalmed bodies of David, Solomon, and other Judean kings.

If this be true, however, it is obvious to all who are familiar with oriental customs, that the bodies must have been taken from their original resting place and deposited here, since it was the habit of the Jews to construct rock-cut tombs beneath the ground for the great men of that age. It is more probable that the real sepulchers are beneath this building and this sarcophagus is merely the cenotaph erected to mark the spot. Dr. Pierotti, architect engineer to the Pasha of Jerusalem claims to have discovered the external approach to these tombs from the western brow of Mount Zion, a few yards to the right of the foreground of this picture. According to his plan of the caverns, which he acknowledges to be in part conjectural, they honey-comb the ground underneath the cemetery exhibited in our picture, and are probably connected by an upward shaft with the room of the sarcophagus. As his work of investigation was confessedly incomplete, and especially as his reputation for accuracy and thoroughness is not above suspicion, we shall be forced to await further developments for a satisfactory account of these tombs. It is to be hoped that the Palestine Exploration Society of London, which is conducting the researches at Jerusalem, will ere long institute inquiries in this direction.

JESUS AS KING.

BY REV. SIMEON GILBERT.

AS Jesus stood before Pilate, the mocking squad of cruel, jeering soldiers and the hate-frenzied minions of the Jewish hierarchy, there was nothing to remind one that he was a king—nothing except it were the crown of thorns upon his brow, the faded piece of royal apparel they had put upon him, and the reed placed in his hand. In appearance and outward circumstance as un-regal a person as was ever seen; but, in fact, the kingliest Being whose sovereign presence ever lightened this globe.

A wider contrast between the seeming and the real it is not possible to imagine. And yet, even then, there was that in the personal aspect, bearing, and manner of Jesus which most strangely compelled the conviction that he was indeed what his foes tauntingly accused him of claiming to be, a king—the Messianic King of the Jews. And it was not in the spirit of mere sarcasm, I think, that Pilate caused the inscription to be placed over the cross, written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, that all might read it, "The King of the Jews."

Pervading, as a golden beam of light, the whole prophetic hope of the ancient religion, was the idea of a King, who should be the deliverer of the oppressed, the glorious benefactor of all the obedient, King of kings and Lord of lords.

In order that he might be a world-redeemer, he would be a Ruler, of the increase of whose kingdom there should be no end. Yet the actual attainment and universal acknowledgment of his position, it was always expected, would be through struggle and conquest. The world's Redeemer would first of all be the world's conqueror. Then, the name of his kingdom would only be another name for a system of universal order, prosperity, security, and happiness. By just what means, however, he would conquer the world unto himself, and then rule it, was a matter which the ancient hope foresaw but dimly. At his advent the Magi, following their star, came to worship him that was "born king of the Jews;" and the angels announcing his birth to the shepherds spoke of him as "a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." The Forerunner, "the Voice" sent to prepare the way, did so by proclaiming at once the necessity and the encouragement to repent; for that a new kingdom was at hand. Jesus himself began his ministry reiterating the same announcement: "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Throughout his ministry, the "gospel of the kingdom" was a chief theme of discourse in presence of his disciples, taking the utmost pains to instruct and educate them into a right apprehension of the real nature of this kingdom. At his trial, being charged with claiming to be a king, he solemnly admits it. He was king; for this purpose had he come into the world. He did indeed say that his kingdom was not *of* this world; nevertheless it was *in* it, and that to stay, and spread, and penetrate, and overshadow, and subdue all else. He spoke of it as beginning silently and unobserved, but of himself, its King, as having "all power, both in heaven and on earth" given to him. At the beginning he said the new order of things was "at hand." Near the close of his ministry he exclaimed: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." To his disciples he plainly said that the great change in the divine *regime* for the administration of the grace of human salvation was presently to take place; and he gave them a "sign" whereby, when it did occur, they might know, and all the world thereafter might be certified, that the transition had been made, and the mediatorial King was upon his throne, the kingdom actually begun. The "everlasting doors" were already lifted up, and the King of glory had come in. A series of conquests, as glorious as they were gracious, was inaugurated to go on until, the mediatorial work being finished, all things should be again delivered up unto the Father.

As to what is the nature of this kingdom, it may be said that it is, in the highest sense, a kingdom of truth, and a true kingdom. Its authority is the authority of truth; but it is more than that,—it is also the authority of a Person. Its right to enforce obedience is the highest and best conceivable. It springs from the combined right and potency to govern of the supreme personal Being, and of the fundamental truth of all being. Truth alone has a real power of its own. Truth is fact. Truth is what is. It is the actual and exact correspondence between thought and reality. So far the religion of Jesus Christ is of this nature. It is the exponent of what God's character is; what man's character and necessities are; what has been; what, from the necessity of the case, must be, and must be done; what *may* be, and what *will* be—all such realities, verities, certainties, which it infinitely concerns us to be sure about and to heed. Truths of this sort are in their nature regal. He is most royal who most embodies, impersonates, and enforces them. For this reason is Jesus Christ the kingliest of all. "For this cause," he said to Pilate, "came I into the world; for this was I born, that I might bear witness to the truth." He is The King!

The ineffable serenity of The Man in presence of the insanely arrogant and

infuriate rulers of this world is nothing strange. It was the simplest possible expression of the true state of his mind, conscious of standing on the very firmament of truth itself. Their power was a vain show, a sham authority, which the first touch of God's finger would make crumble into dust and reveal its unreality. In spite of all that plotting kings or conspiring priests could do, their worst would only turn out to the furtherance of his best. Out from the blackest darkness the truth would shine more brightly than ever.

Indignities of incredible scornfulness and cruelty would, he well knew, be thrust at him, in hopes to exasperate every thorn, redouble every blow, and make more ragged the edge of every nail of his cross; nevertheless, all the while was Jesus in reality master of the situation; never more confident than then of the issue so opposite to their intent. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall never pass away." His death was for the life of the world; his crucifixion, in the unsearchable mystery of his grace, becoming in effect his coronation. They, for the moment, seemed to have some power as rulers; *kis*, the power which, while ruling all that is good, over-rules all that is hostile.

This kingdom is a kingdom of truth, the true kingdom—a measureless realm of perfect truths, perfectly adjusted to each other, in exactest and sweetest order and subordination; but Love is its first principle, and divine forgiveness its *magna charta*. Being a real kingdom, it does more than enjoin formal submission and outward conformity. It strikes straight to the central motive of conduct. Getting first of all at the hearts of its subjects, it gains the whole. Setting there its own living law, the total outcome constitutes a most real and blessed kind of dominion. Jesus is the king of truth, and his followers belong to the king dom wherein men live the truths they hold to.

It was known that his kingdom would be "an everlasting kingdom"; his scepter, "the scepter of righteousness"; the "government would be upon his shoulders"; all the kings of the nations would eventually "come bending unto him," and bringing with them the choicest of their treasures. The heroism of David's, and the splendor of Solomon's reign would be eclipsed in the ever growing glories of the kingdom about to be. The popular hope of freedom, prosperity, and general blessedness was held fast to the ancient and constantly renewed promise of The King.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of Hosts,
He is the King of glory.

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XLV.—NOV. 7, 1875.—THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

SCRIPTURE.—John 16 : 7-14. Commit 7-14; Primary Verse, 8.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He shall teach you all things."—JOHN 14: 26.

TOPIC.—Power of the Holy Ghost.

HOME READINGS.

M.	2 Pet.	1: 1-21	All Scripture Inspired by the Spirit.
T.	1 Cor.	2: 1-16	Reveals the Deep Things of God.
W.	John	3: 1- 8	Must be Born of the Spirit.
Th.	Eph.	2: 1-18	Through Him is Access to God.
F.	2 Cor.	3: 1-18	Changed by Him into God's Image.
S.	Rom.	15: 13-19	The Secret of Paul's Preaching.
S.	1 Cor.	12: 1-13	All Gifts come of the Spirit.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE COMFORTER.—Who is referred to by "The Comforter"? 14: 16. See by what two other names he is called. 15: 16; 1 John 2: 20. In what way is the Holy Spirit a *Comforter?* 2 Cor. 1: 3. Does he comfort *you* in that way? In 14: 16 the Holy Spirit is spoken of as "*another* Comforter." That makes *two*. Now turn to that and see if you can tell who the *other* was.

HIS COMING EXPEDIENT.—Why does Christ say it is best for him to go away? 7. Read verse 8, and find out one reason why Christ, for the sake of the *world*, wanted to go and have the Holy Ghost come. Read verse 13 and see why he wanted it so for the sake of the *apostles*. Read verse 14 and see why for *his own sake*.

HIS OFFICE.—When the Holy Spirit came what was he to do? 8. Why of *Sin?* 9. See 15: 24 and see why it is sinful not to believe on him. Why of *Righteousness?* 10. Had the world thought that Christ was *not* righteous? 9: 24; 18: 30. Why of *Judgment?* 11. What effect was the death of Christ to have upon the devil? Heb. 2: 14. What was the Holy Spirit to do for the apostles? 13. What will he do to help you understand his truths? Eph. 1: 17, 18. What was he to do to help the *memory* of the disciples? 14: 26. How can we best understand the Scriptures? 1 Cor. 2: 9. What was he to do for Christ? 14. The Holy Spirit can do, oh, so much for *you!* Will you not pray for his presence in your heart?

LESSON OUTLINE.

THE COMFORTER.

HIS COMING EXPEDIENT.

1.—FOR THE WORLD.

a. "Convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." 8.

b. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." 7: 39.

c. "Being by the right hand of God exalted, he hath shed forth this." Acts 2: 33, 41.

2.—FOR THE APOSTLES.

a. "That he may abide with you forever." 14: 16.

b. "Shall teach you all things." 14: 26.

c. "Will show you things so come." 13.

3.—FOR HIMSELF.

a. "He shall testify of me." 15: 26.

b. "He shall glorify me." 14.

HIS OFFICE.

1.—TO CONVINCE THE WORLD.

a. Of Sin:

"Because they believe not on me." 9.

"Now they have no cloak for their sin." 15: 22-24.

"When they heard this they were pricked in their hearts." Acts 2: 23, 37.

"That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Rom. 3: 19.

b. Of Righteousness:

"Because I go to my Father." 10.

"God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ." Acts 2: 36, 37.

"Wherefore God hath highly exalted him." Phil. 2: 8, 9.

c. Of Judgment:

"Because the prince of this world is judged." 11.

"That through death he might destroy the devil." Heb. 2: 14.

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."—2 Cor. 5: 10.

2.—TO TEACH.

a. By quickening the understanding:

"He shall teach you all things." 14: 26.

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Eph. 1: 17, 18.

"Ye need not that any man should teach you." 1 John 2: 20, 27.

b. By quickening the memory:

"He shall bring all things to your remembrance." 14: 26.

"When Jesus was glorified then remembered they." 12: 16.

c. By illuminating the Word:

"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2: 9-14.

"He will guide you into all truth." 13.

3.—TO TESTIFY OF CHRIST.

a. As to Himself:

"He shall testify of me." 15: 26.

"He shall glorify me." 16: 14.

"It is the Spirit that beareth witness." 1 John 5: 6.

b. As to his words:

"Shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said." 14: 26.

"Whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak." 16: 13.

"Shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you." 16: 15.

c. Through his disciples:

"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Acts 1: 8.

"God also bearing them witness with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Heb. 2: 4.

"Preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost." 1 Pet. 1: 12.

d. Against his murderers:

"Now when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts." Acts 2: 37.

"And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost." Acts 5: 30-32.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE COMFORTER.—The word *Paraclete* which is translated "Comforter," can not find in any English word an exact habitation. It is larger than the word Comforter, though that contains the sweetest part of its meaning. If we had one which would add to that the idea of *helper*, *advocate*, and *mediator* we should more exactly express the original. But none of those words alone will do. We can not afford to adopt either one of them at the expense of losing the one we have. We can not afford to lose the idea of the solace that is conveyed in it. Like the early churches, we want to be found "walking in the fear of the Lord and the *comfort* of the Holy Ghost." Acts 9: 31. The title, however, is not confined to the third person of the Trinity alone. Christ by inference applied it to himself in saying: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you *another* Comforter." 14: 16.

Besides this the Holy Spirit is called: "The Spirit" (7: 39); "The Holy Ghost" (14: 26); "The Spirit of Truth" (14: 17); "The Holy One" (1 John 2: 20); "The Spirit of the Father" (Matt. 10: 20); "The Spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8: 9); "The Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3: 17); "The Spirit of Wisdom" (Eph. 1: 17); "The Spirit of Adoption" (Rom. 8: 15); "The Spirit of Holiness" (Rom. 1: 14), and a host of other designations expressive of the the gifts, the power, and the office of this person of the Godhead.

HIS COMING EXPEDIENT.—The disciples were sorrowing over his going as over an affliction. He announces that it is not an affliction at all, but a blessing. They had been clinging to that which was material about Christ. Looking too much for external glory they must see all their hopes of that entirely wrecked before they could see his spiritual glory. They indeed lost Christ—as man—but how infinite was their gain to receive him back—as God! Christ's work upon earth was to pay the price of redemption, to satisfy the law. If he had continued here until now the price would not have been paid, the law not been satisfied. It is the Spirit's work to prepare our hearts to accept the atonement, to lead us forward into all truth—to make us partakers of Christ himself. Better to have the Spirit's presence in our hearts than merely be able to look upon the outward form of Christ. As is shown in the Lesson Outline it was better for the World, better for the Apostles, better for Christ himself, that he should go away and the Comforter should come.

HIS OFFICE.—1. *To reprove* (*convince*, rather) *the world.* (*a.*) *Of Sin.* The first office of the Holy Ghost upon the human heart is to convince it of its sin. No sinner ever turns to the Saviour without first feeling that he is a sinner, for no one but a sinner needs a Saviour. It convinces, 1st of its sinful state, 2nd of its sinful nature. As *Henry* puts it: Of the *fact* of sin—of its *folly*—of its *filth*—of its *fountain*—of its *fruit*. Now what is the sin of all sins? The Saviour, in mentioning only one virtually declared that by the side of that all others are insignificant. *Because they believe not on me.* Unbelief is the sin of sins. It is because men will not believe on Christ that they perish. If a man were dying of a fearful disease, and a remedy were presented to him that had cured in numberless other cases—never, indeed, had been known to fail—if such a remedy were offered to him, and because of unbelief he should throw it away, he

would perish because he threw away the cure, and not because of the disease. He would perish *of* his disease, but not because of it. And who will say that he would not merit his doom? Christ is the Remedy — proven to be the cure of sin, by signs, and wonders, and miracles; by a sinless life, a triumphant death, and a glorious resurrection; by the multitudes that have been cured. If this remedy is rejected what hope is there for the sinner?

(*b.*) *Of Righteousness*—of his righteousness. He had been declared "a sinner" (9:24); "a malefactor" (18:30); was "made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13); was made sin who knew no sin. 2 Cor. 5:21. The second office of the Comforter, therefore, is to convince one of the righteousness of Christ. When one's eyes are opened to his own sinfulness, invariably then he beholds the righteousness of the Saviour — and never until he does. Until that day of unsealing of the eyes, Christ "hath no form or comeliness," "there is no beauty that we should desire him." First the Holy Spirit convicts one of the insufficiency of human righteousness — then of the sufficiency of the righteousness of Christ. *Because I go to my Father.* His resurrection and ascension were indisputable proofs of the truthfulness of his claim to be the Son of God.

(*c.*) *Of Judgment.* Awakened to see their sin in not believing in and in crucifying Christ, led to see the righteousness of the one they had thus slain, what remained for the Jews but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation"? Under the burning words of Peter who declared: "Him have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain," they were "pricked in their heart," and dreading that day of judgment cried out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do." Thus literally was this prediction fulfilled. And no sinner ever has been convicted of sin and contrasted himself with the sinlessness of the Saviour without also having a conviction that for sin there is a *judgment* — that for the sinner there is an inevitable day of punishment. He who has not felt this has not felt "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." The Holy Ghost has not performed its first office in his heart. That day is too plainly indicated in the Scriptures for a possible doubt concerning its coming. See Is. 33: 14; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 13:40–42; 25:46; John 5:28, 29; Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1, 2. Sooner or later an unbelieving sinner will meet a rejected Saviour — the Saviour, then a Saviour no longer, but as judge, and the sinner as the criminal. But mark the mercy of God's dealings with him. He is convicted of *sin;* but is pointed first to the *righteousness* of Christ, which is available for him, before he is pointed to the *judgment.* Here, as ever, it is mercy first and judgment afterward. *Because the prince of this world is judged.* It would seem from this that it is the devil that has stood in the way of a belief in future punishment. He was the first one to say: "Ye shall not surely die." He is the one that is always saying: "There is no day of judgment!" But when he himself in the heart of each one is "judged" — when evil is made to appear evil — then will the day of judgment appear absolutely certain. And when he is cast out entirely from the hearts of men no one will then be found to say that God has no day of wrath for those that do evil. *Is judged.* His doom was spoken when Christ died and rose again. Final triumph over him is already recorded in God's book of fate.

2. *To Teach.* — There were "many things" that the Saviour desired to say that his disciples were not then prepared to hear. What were they? Imagination only can guess. Perhaps new doctrines — perhaps his sufferings on the cross — perhaps new applications of old truths — or their emancipation from the idea that he was sent for the Jews only — or, it may be, their blindness shut out from them a vision like that of the apocalypse. Whatever it was we may be sure that it was something which *not*

to know was a great loss to them. Ah, what glorious things were hid from them because they were not yet able to "bear" them! What things are hidden from our eyes because of our like dull scholarship! We walk in darkness where we might walk in day; we faint where we might be strong; we walk where we might run; we run where we might fly. It was the work of the Spirit to teach the disciples these things which Jesus had been unable to communicate to them. It was his work to guide them and us into "all truth," or, rather, the *whole* truth—as it is in Christ Jesus. Christ spoke the *truth*, and *nothing but the truth*, but not *the whole truth*. Not a promise that we shall know the truth all at once, and so immediately be infallible, but he will "guide" us into it. When shall we know it *all!* Happily for us we never shall. An eternity and new revelations all the time! Our treasure-house of truth is never to be exhausted. *Whatsoever he shall hear.* No new gospel—"the same old, old story." *Shall shew you things to come.* Perhaps they all had their eyes open to the marvelous beauty and glory of the life to come, though to John only was vouchsafed that wonderful vision of the new Jerusalem. And, whenever our eyes are turned with love and longing toward that better city whose builder and maker is God, and we feel that that is really our home, the only home worth the price of all our energies, we may be sure that the Holy Spirit is at work in our hearts, and is showing us "things to come."

3. *To testify of Christ.*—He came "not to speak of himself," but of Christ. He came to turn the world to Christ as Christ had come to turn the world to the Father. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." It is his mission to convince the world of Christ's divinity. And, conversely, "no man speaking by the Spirit calleth Jesus accursed." It is as much the mission of the devil to testify against as it is that of the Holy Ghost to testify for Christ. And it is the further mission of the Spirit to glorify Christ. 1st, By taking the things of Christ and showing them unto us. 15. He fructifies the seed that Christ sowed and makes it germinate, and bud and blossom and bear fruit. Through him we catch the divine meaning of what Christ said and did. 2nd, He glorifies Christ in our hearts. Having convinced us of our sin, shown to us the cleansing righteousness of Christ, led us to flee from the wrath to come, its final office is to show the Saviour to us as the one altogether lovely, and change us "into the same image from glory to glory." 2 Cor. 3:18.

Crumbs from the Table.

1—How little we know when to sorrow and when to rejoice! The disciples were mourning because Jesus was going away from them. But his going was necessary to redemption. What a blessing would they have withheld if their affectionate sorrow had retained him with them. Had they kept him, they had not had the gift of the Holy Spirit, and so would not have seen three thousand converted in one day. Let us, when seeming afflictions come, remember that they are but for a moment, "and that they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Matt. 5: 11, 12; 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18; Heb. 12: 10; 1 Pet. 4: 13, 14.

2.—The sin of unbelief is something more than a rejection of Christ as the Son of God. It is a declaration that God would not send his Son; that all the divine attestations of his divinity by signs, by miracles, by prophecy, are untrue, and so God is made a liar. When our goverment gives to its representative abroad the seal and attestation of his ministry, if he then is rejected and insulted by the people of the country to which he is accredited, it is a rejection and insult of this government as well as its servant. 3: 36; 5: 23; 8: 23; 10: 30; 15: 23, 24; 12: 48; 1 John 2: 23; 4: 15; 2 John 9.

3.—The heart once convicted of sin does not stop to compare itself with other hearts, but with the righteousness of Christ. It does not say: "I guess I am as good as my neighbors," but "Woe is me, for I am the chief of sinners!" It knows that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Eccl. 7: 20; Jer. 17: 9; Matt. 12: 35; Mark 7: 21–23; 1 Cor. 15: 9; 1 Tim. 1: 15; Jas. 2: 10, 11.

4.—Even the Holy Ghost came with no new revelation. He came with the same "old, old story" that the world needs so much, and that some of us have learned to love so well. He came not even to speak of himself, but just to tell anew that story. And whenever men are converted we may be sure that it is not because they have heard something new, but that same story of love and

redemption. 3:14; 8:23; 12:32, 33; 14:6; 17:3; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:7.

5.—Oh, the power of the Holy Ghost—its convicting, converting, instructing power! And yet there are many who do not seem to have even "so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." If men were only thoroughly filled with his Spirit, one man might convert a nation, and soon every knee would bow. Pray, *pray*, PRAY more for the gifts and power of the Holy Ghost! Zech. 4:6; Micah 3:8; Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 2:4; Eph. 2:18; 3:18; 6:17; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 2:4.

HYMN.

Come Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

Look how we grovel here below,
Fond of these trifling toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys.

BLACKBOARD.

"Ye shall Receive
POWER
After that the
HOLY GHOST
Has come upon you."
Acts 1:8.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

CHRIST'S DEPARTURE.—If you had lived for three years with the Saviour, had seen his wonderful miracles, had daily talked with him, and received many tokens of his love, how would you feel if he should tell you he was going away, and where he was going to be you could not come? Sorrowful, no doubt. Well, that is the way the disciples felt when he told them that. They had been with him that length of time, and the gentle and loving Saviour had become so dear to them that they felt they *could* not part with him. He was going away—where? How? Ah, it was necessary that he should go. The price of our redemption had to be paid in his blood. If he had not died we should have had no way of escape from punishment and the bondage of sin.

THE COMFORTER'S COMING.—It was best Christ should go, so he said. It was best because if he went he would send the "Comforter." "The Comforter" is God's Holy Spirit, and it is better to have him in our hearts than just to be able to look on Christ. So Christ went away, and he did send the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the disciples. What did the Holy Spirit do for them? It taught them all about Christ, it enabled them to read the Scriptures understandingly, and it gave them power in preaching the gospel. Does the Holy Spirit come into the hearts of people nowadays? Oh yes—into yours if you will let him. Very often he has been there. When sinful things that you have been in the habit of doing have appeared very bad to you—so bad that you have said, "I won't do so any more," it is the Holy Spirit that has made them so. When Christ has seemed to you so lovely and so good that you have wanted to be his child forever, and never be bad any more, it is the Holy Spirit that has shown you the Saviour just as he is. When you have thought of yourself as a sinner who is sure to be punished in the next world if you did not flee to Christ, the Holy Spirit has been showing you that there must be a day of judgment for sinners. Now yield to his guiding. Become Christians. And then what will he do? Help, strengthen, teach, comfort, support, give wisdom, make your life a happy one here, and give you an abundant entrance into heaven hereafter.

MEMORY VERSES.

Come, Holy Spirit, come,
Let thy bright beams arise;
Dispel the sorrow from our hearts,
The darkness from our eyes.

Dwell, Spirit, in our hearts,
Our minds from bondage free,
Then shall we know and praise and love
The Father, Son, and Thee.

BLACKBOARD.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Drives out	Brings in
SIN,	CHASTITY,
SATAN,	CHRIST,
SORROW.	COMFORT.

Pray for His Presence.

LESSON XLVI.—NOV. 14, 1875.—JESUS INTERCEDING.

SCRIPTURE.—John 17 : 15-21. Commit 15-21; Primary Verse, 15.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

21 That they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. 7 : 25.

TOPIC.—SANCTIFICATION.

HOME READINGS.

M. Matt. 6 : 5-15.....The Model Prayer.
T. Matt. 11 : 25,26.....A Prayer of Thanksgiving.
W. John 6 : 1-11.....Giving of Thanks.
Th. John 11 : 41,42.....Prayer at the Grave of Lazarus.
F. Matt. 26 : 36-46..... Prayer at Gethsemane.
S. John 17 : 1-26.....His Parting Prayer.
S. Rom. 8 : 32-39.....Now Maketh Intercession for us.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE PRAYER.—Where does the prayer begin? 1. Just before what was it offered? 18: 1. In verses 1-5 for whom does Christ pray? In verses 6-19 for whom? In 20-24? For whom in *this* prayer does he *not* pray? 9. As he prays for the disciples only let us see what he says as to how we shall know them.

SHOWN.—What in the 6th verse shows what a disciple will do? What in the 7th and 8th verses tells what he knows? What in the 10th shows what they do for Christ? What in the 14th tells what the world does to them? What in the 22nd and 23rd show what they ought to be to each other? In 13: 35 see how the same thought is expressed.

SEPARATED.—For what does Christ *not* pray in verse 15? In it what *does* he pray for? What in the Lord's Prayer is like that last? Read 8: 44 and you will find what special evil Christ prayed that his disciples might be kept from the power of. What does he say about his disciples in verse 16? How does Hebrew 11: 13, 14 explain that? What light is thrown on it by Phil. 3: 20?

SANCTIFIED—Means made holy, or "devoted" to holy purposes. *How* were the disciples to be sanctified? 17. What is meant by "the word"? What did Christ do that they might be sanctified? 19. Sanctified himself—how? By his death on the cross. He was already holy, and therefore he could only be "devoted" to holy purposes, such as giving himself to die for the salvation of the world.

SENT.—The disciples were sent—where? 18. By whom? In the same way as—whom? For what purpose was Christ sent? 4: 34. For what, then, were the disciples sent? What are they called? 2 Cor. 5: 20. What were they to do? Mark 16: 15. What was to be the effect of their preaching? 20. Have you any evidence that Christ prayed for you? 20.

SAME IN SPIRIT.—For what had this prayer been offered? 21. For what had he glorified them? 22. What is meant by being "one"? 13: 35. If his disciples are "one" in this way, what will the world know? 21, 23.

LESSON OUTLINE.

THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

HOW SHOWN.

a. Know Christ is divine:

"Now have they known that all things—given me are of thee." 7.

"Have known surely that I came out from thee." 8; 16. 27.

"We believe that thou camest forth from God." 16: 30.

"How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. 10: 14.

b. Keep his words:

"And they have kept thy word." 6.

"If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed." 8: 31.

"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." 14: 21.

"Whoso keepeth his word in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2: 5.

c. Glorify Him:

"I am glorified in them." 10.

"Christ shall be magnified in my body whether it be by life or by death." Phil. 1: 20.

"Are the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ." 2 Cor. 8: 23.

"Bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit." 1 Cor. 6: 20.

d. Are hated of the world:

"The world hath hated them." 14.

"I have chosen you out of the world, therefore—hateth you." 15: 19.

"Have persecuted me; they will also persecute you." 15: 20.

"A friend of the world is the enemy of God." Jas. 4: 4.

e. Love the brethren:

"All men know ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another." 13: 35.

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." 1 John 4: 20.

"See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Pet. 1: 22.

HOW SUSTAINED.

a. From what:

"The evil." 15.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Matt. 6: 13.

"This present evil world." Gal. 1: 4.

"Ye have overcome the wicked one." 1 John 2: 13, 14.

"He that is begotten of God—wicked one toucheth him not." 1 John 5: 18.

b. For what:

"The coming of our Lord—with all his saints." 1 Thess. 3: 13.

"That ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord." 1 Cor. 1: 8.

c. By what:

"Holy Father, keep them through thine own name." 11.

"Those that thou gavest me I have kept." 12; 6: 39.

"No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." 10: 29.

"Kept by the power of God, through faith." 1 Pet. 1: 5.

"Preserved in Jesus Christ." Jude 1.

HOW SEPARATED.

a. In character:

"Chosen thee to be a peculiar people." Deut. 14: 2.

"His peculiar treasure." Ps. 135: 4.

"A royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Pet. 2: 9.

"A peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. 2: 14.

b. In purpose:

"Not conformed to this world." Rom. 12: 2.

"They seek a country." Heb. 11: 13–16.

"Looking for—the glorious appearing." Tit. 2: 13.

"Waiting for the coming of our Lord." 1 Cor. 1: 7.

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3: 3.

HOW SANCTIFIED.

a. Through the Word:

"Through thy truth; thy word is truth." 17.

"Ye are clean through the word." 15: 3.

"The washing of water by the word. Eph. 5: 26.

"All Scripture is profitable." 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

b. Through Christ:

"Shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience." Heb. 9: 13, 14.

"Are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus." Heb. 10: 10.

"Christ Jesus—made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1: 30.

c. Through the Holy Spirit:

"Sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Rom. 15: 16.

"Through sanctification of the Spirit." 2 Thess. 2: 13.

"In the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit." 1 Cor. 6: 11.

HOW SENT.

a. As Christ was:

"Even so have I also sent them." 18.

"I came down—not to do mine own will." 6: 38.

"We are ambassadors for Christ." 2 Cor. 5: 20.

b. To Preach:

"Shall believe on me through their word." 20.

"Preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16: 15.

"Men who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Tim. 2: 2.

HOW STRONG.

In Unity:

"That the world may know thou hast sent me." 23.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." 13: 35.

"Continuing daily with one accord—having favor with all the people." Acts 2: 46, 47.

a. In Christ:

"We being many are one body in Christ, and members one of another." Rom. 12: 5.

"By one Spirit we are baptized into one body." 1 Cor. 12: 13.

"I in them and thou in me." 23.

b. Of Faith:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith." Eph. 4: 13.

"Be like-minded—of one accord, of one mind." Phil. 2: 3.

"Finally be ye all of one mind." 1 Pet. 3: 8.

c. Of Spirit:

"He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." 1 Cor. 6: 17.

"Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4: 3.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." Acts 4: 32.

d. Of Name:

"I am of Paul—and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas. Is Christ divided?" 1 Cor. 1: 12, 13.

"Whereas there is among you envying, strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal?" 1 Cor. 3: 3.

"Speak the same thing; be no divisions among you." 1 Cor. 1: 10.

"Mark them which cause divisions—avoid them." Rom. 16: 17.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE PRAYER.—The recorded prayers of Jesus, with the exception of the one which extends through the chapter which contains our lesson, are wonderfully short. They seem like mere ejaculations as compared with the long, deacon-ish prayers to which we have been accustomed. We are not absolutely certain that a church meeting ever would have supposed that one whose invocations were so short was in any way possessed of "a special gift for prayer." But they are as wonderfully to the point as they are short. They begin with no elaborate ascriptions of power, nor of wisdom nor of glory. "My Father" is the simple phrase that wings the arrow straight to its mark, and in the prayer which he left to us as the model of all prayers he gives us the right immediately to approach the divine presence with the same tender address, and say: "*Our* Father which art in heaven." Almost all his prayers, we note, commence with thanksgiving, and in this we see the truth, not often recognized, that those who are thankful for past favors are more likely to secure new ones. And he teaches us that we also should be brief in our prayers. "When ye pray," is his command, "use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking."

But Christ's prayers were not always short. When he took his disciples up in the mountain to pray we may be sure his prayers were no brief, sententious petitions then. What long communings he often had when alone with his Father we may surmise from that instance where "he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Luke 6: 12. His private devotions were long continued, *but his public prayers were short.* Perhaps there is a lesson for us in that.

The prayer with which in our lesson we have specially to do is remarkable for its exaltation, for its assurance, for its filial, confiding address, for its tenderness, for its familiar dealing with great moral magnitudes—for its super-human character. No mere man would have uttered such words. Weigh them well, and see how improbable it is that any one, solely human, should have given expression to such utterances. Of this prayer Luther quaintly says: "It is an exceeding fervent, hearty prayer—a prayer wherein he discovereth both unto us and unto the Father, the abysses of his heart, and poureth forth its treasures." The godly Spener would never preach upon this chapter, affirming that a true understanding of it required a greater faith than the Lord was wont to communicate to us on our pilgrimage. And yet he had it read three times to himself just before he died. John Knox, in his last sickness, directed that this prayer, the fifty-third of Isaiah, and a chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians should be read to him every day. It has in it three well marked divisions. Verses 1–5 are a prayer for himself; 6–19 prayer for his disciples; 20–24 for all those who in time to come were to believe on his name. That with which we have to do is that which specially concerns the disciples, and particularly describes their character and office—tells, in fact, how they are sustained, separated, sanctified, sent, and are the same in spirit.

SUSTAINED.—15. *That thou shouldest keep them.* Hitherto Christ himself had kept them (12), so that none had been lost "but the son of perdition." Christ does not admit here, be it observed, that *he* has lost even this one. It does not so say, and in the ninth verse of the next chapter he declares: "*I* have lost none." Judas was lost of his own choice, and went, as is expressively said, "to his own place." Acts 1: 25. He was lost, so it is puzzlingly said, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." What Scripture? No special passage. The Scriptures did not indicate that *Judas*

was *fated* to suffer his fearful doom. But they indicate that all sons of perdition shall be lost, and in the destruction that came to him they were specifically fulfilled. *Keep them.* They needed to be kept. No one starts out upon a Christian life without feeling that he needs to be sustained by a power out of and stronger than himself. *From the evil.* Probably the "Prince of this world" so often mentioned by Christ is referred to here (8:44; 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and whose potency is so often recognized in other portions of the Scripture. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness, against spiritual wickedness." Eph. 6:12. Flesh and blood are mere tools. Back of them and wielding them is Satan himself. We are exhorted to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. 5:8. And when we obtain the victory over temptations we are commended as having "overcome the wicked one." 1 John 2:13, 14; see, also, 1 John 5:18, 19. The fact that the devil had put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ, and just before the act "entered into him" gives particular emphasis to this petition that God would keep the rest of the disciples "from the evil." The Sermon on the Mount and other exhortations to be perfect, place before us heights that in ourselves we feel to be unattainable. This petition of Christ that God would keep us from the evil shows us the divine hand that shall lift us thither.

SEPARATED.—The "Lesson Outline" well shows what is meant by Christ's declaration that his disciples are "not of this world." And yet they were to be *in* it. He expressly says that he does not pray that they should be taken out of it. In so doing he contravened the idea of monastic seclusion and retirement from the world to escape its temptations. He did not pray that they should be taken out of the world, though he saw that fiery trials and persecutions awaited them. To have taken them out would have been to have withdrawn the army of the Lord from the field of battle before a blow had been struck to loose the world from the shackles of sin. Even now, though the battle long has been joined, from what portion of the field can we spare one true soldier? The need of every arm is not too strongly expressed in this stanza from Bishop Coxe's stirring battle hymn:

> Worlds are charging — heaven beholding;
> Thou hast but an hour to fight;
> Now the blazoned cross upholding,
> On! right onward for the right!
> On! let all the soul within you
> For the truth's sake go abroad.
> Strike! let every nerve and sinew
> Tell on ages — tell for God!"

But not only for the sake of others did the disciples then and the disciples now need to be in the world and in its conflicts. They themselves became the stronger and the better for this warfare. Peter was very willing to follow his Lord *out* of the world, but he was not yet ready to live for him *in* it. Nobly to live for him is better than to die for him. We fear, as Mr. Moody says, that too many people think the church is sort of a hospital where they can be nursed and tended—a place of retirement from the great warfare that is going on — instead of being the encampment of an army, and to which each man, woman, and child obtains entrance only as each takes the vows of an enlisted soldier.

SANCTIFIED.—17, 19. *Through thy word.* The Scriptures, so it is said, are given by inspiration of God, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Men who have become eminent for their holiness, for faith, for serenity, for joy, are men who have been "mighty in the Scriptures"— who have not only taken them as the rule of their conduct, but have meditated long and often upon their sayings — who, like Joshua, have not let the book of the law depart out of their mouth, and have meditated therein day and night.

But verse 19 presents a puzzle. ***I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified.*** As he was already holy, "a lamb without blemish and without spot," how could he "sanctify" himself? Many unsatisfactory answers to this have been given. That which leaves nothing to be desired is, that as all sacrifices were declared to be holy unto the Lord, he referred especially to the sanctification of himself as a sacrifice. As he thus sanctified himself so are we to present our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1. So are we to crucify "the flesh with the affections and lusts," and be crucified unto the world. Gal. 2:19; 5:24; 6:14.

SENT.—***As thou hast sent me***, etc. He came down not to do his own will, but to do the will of him that sent him. The first thing, therefore, for a Christian to enquire, with reference to any undertaking, is: What is the will of God in this matter? He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister," and we are told "in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." He came "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God," and his last command was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

SAME IN SPIRIT.—21. The final aim of all the petitions in this prayer is that the disciples "may be one"—and one in that undivided sense in which the Father and the Son are one. What chance of divisions among Christians would there be if such a unity existed among them? Who then would say: "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas" when all would be "of Christ"? The great division of the early church was into Jew and Gentile, and most earnestly did Paul set himself to obliterate it. He declared to the Romans: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and the unwise," and to the Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Many a denomination has erected its walls with less excuse than the Jews had in fencing out the Gentiles. But those divisions had to disappear, as all others will. Let the world be Babel-voiced, but the church of God should always speak in the same language. It has been well said that "the points on which Christians agree are facts; those on which they differ are theories." ***Mere*** theories must not separate us. We are to be ***one*** even as God and Christ are—one ***in*** them. Indeed if we truly are in them, can we be otherwise than one? "For whereas," says Paul, "there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not yet carnal, and walk as men." And the reason why Jesus so fervently prayed that such unity might exist was "that the world might know that thou hast sent me." If Christians were one grand unit, what an impression they could make on the world! It never could withstand the force of one united charge. "Mark them," therefore, "that cause divisions among you, and avoid them."

Crumbs from the Table.

1.—What is the measure of spiritual growth? Certainly not public prayers nor public ministrations of any kind. But if our private devotions grow sweeter and more necessary to us, if in them the presence of the Holy Spirit becomes more and more manifest, and we seem to be fed, as it were, with manna from on high, then we may be sure that spiritually we are growing. Many a one who can pray glibly enough in public avoids, or is dumb, in closet-prayer. Many a one who can not pray in public "to the edification of others," finds his way directly to the throne of blessing when praying in secret. The exhortation to us is to pray in secret. Matt. 6:5, 6.

2.—What a comfort it is that in our Christian life we have not wholly to rely upon ourselves! Christ prayed the Father that we might be kept. What is there that can avail as against that prayer? If we place ourselves under that we are as though under the shadow of the divine wings. Only when we stray away from them do we hear the swoop and feel the talons of the enemy. 2 K. 6:17; Ps. 34:7; 91:11, 12; Dan. 6:22; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Pet. 2:9.

3.—In what ways should we show we are a "peculiar people"? By not laying up our treasures upon earth, but in heaven, where moth doth not corrupt, nor thieves break through nor steal. Matt. 6:19–21. That, in these days, would mark

any one as peculiar. "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." 1 Pet. 1:15. Filthy conversation is characteristic of the world. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Matt. 5:44. Certainly "the publicans" do not so. Be self-denying, be full of faith, full of prayer; be as pilgrims here seeking a "better country that is a heavenly." Heb. 11:16.

4.—The special need of the times is: more sanctified saints—saints sanctified through the Word. We need more Bible-reading Christians. Alas! that the Bible should be so crowded out and down from its rightful high place in the family. One of the first revivals for which we should pray is a revival of the study of the Scriptures in Christian families. Deut. 11:18; Josh. 1:7; Ps. 119:42, 129-131; Prov. 2:6, 7; Matt. 12:35.

5.—Each one is "sent" to do some work. We may be sure that our mission was born at the same time we were. If we do not find it, it may be it is because we look too high. Even the Master himself did not come himself to convert the whole world. His ingatherings were comparatively insignificant to those of Pentecostal days. Remember that we were not sent so do our own will. God makes choice of our fields of labor for us. If we would hear the "Well done, good and faithful servant" let us do whatever our hands find to do with all our might. Eccl. 9:10; Matt. 25:25, 30; Luke 8:18; 12:41-44; John 4:34; 9:4; 15:2.

HYMN.

Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No; there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.

The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

BLACKBOARD.

AS THOU HAST SENT ME,
EVEN SO
Have I also SENT THEM,
INTO THE WORLD.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Tell about the circumstances of the prayer: Just before death—his disciples troubled—one gone out to betray Christ. This was a prayer for the rest of them.

2.—Prayed, first, that God would keep them from the evil. Did not pray that they should keep themselves, for they could not do that. Every little child has tried to keep himself and failed. God must keep him. He must try in God's help and then he will succeed.

3.—"Not of the world." Not to do as bad people do. Question them as to special things. If a boy swears is he of this world or not of it? etc. Not only must not do as bad people do, but must lay up treasures in heaven, etc.

4.—"Sanctify them through thy word." Sanctify means to make holy. Even children should read the Bible. You can always tell one that loves to read it. He uses decent language, does not take the name of God in vain, etc. Christ sanctified himself by dying on the cross that we might be holy. Read and explain verse 19.

5.—"Even so have I also sent them." Every child a little missionary—"an ambassador for Christ." Explain "ambassador." Enquire in *what* ways one can be a missionary.

6.—"All may be one." Christ prayed that we all might love one another. By his death he meant to banish all unkind words, all cruel blows, all mean selfishness.

MEMORY VERSES.

"Whosoever heareth," shout, shout the sound!
Send the blessed tidings all the world around;
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found,
"Whosoever will may come."

Whosoever cometh need not delay,
Now the door is open, enter while you may;
Jesus is the true, the only living way;
"Whosoever will may come."

BLACKBOARD.

CHRIST PRAYED THAT
WE MIGHT
BE | KEPT FROM EVIL,
MADE HOLY,
MISSIONARIES,
ALL ONE.

LESSON XLVII.—NOV. 21, 1875.—JESUS THE KING.

SCRIPTURE.—John 18: 33-38. Commit 36-38; Primary Verse, 36.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He is Lord of lords and King of kings."—Rev. 17: 14.

TOPIC.—CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is. 9: 1-7.....The Government upon his Shoulders.
T. Dan. 7: 13-28.....An Everlasting Kingdom.
W. Ps. 110: 1-7..... His Enemies to be his Footstool.
Th. Luke 1: 26-38.....To Reign over the House of Jacob.
F. Eph. 1: 1-22.....All Things Under His Feet.
S. 1 Tim. 6: 1-16.....King of kings, Lord of Lords.
S. Rev. 11: 1-15.....All Kingdoms to become Christ's.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE KING QUESTIONED.—Is Christ in the Bible ever called a king? Luke 1: 33; 1 Tim. 6: 15. Who asked him if he were a king? 33. Why was he asked that? Luke 23: 2. Was that true? John 6: 15. Was he ever hailed as king? 12: 13. What other question was he asked? Mark 14: 61. What two other questions did Pilate ask? 38; 19: 9.

REJECTED.—Christ was rejected—by whom? 35. What does John 1: 11 say about this same thing? In what words did the people reject him? Luke 19: 14. Before whom had Jesus been? 24. Where was he arrested? Matt. 26: 36, 47. From Caiaphas where was he taken? 28. Then where? Matt. 27: 2. Before they took him there what did they do to him? Luke 22: 63-65. Where did Pilate send him? Luke 23: 7. What did Herod and his men do to him? Luke 23: 9-11. What question then does Pilate ask him? 35.

HIS KINGDOM.—Was his kingdom like other kingdoms? 36. How does it differ from them? Look in Rom. 14: 17 and find two things that it is not and three things that it is. See in 1 Cor. 15: 50 what can not inherit it? For what was Christ born? 36. His kingdom then is a kingdom of—what? Is it *over* men or *in* them?

HIS SUBJECTS.—What is one thing his subjects do not do? 37. What was Peter told to do when he smote off the servant's ear? Matt. 26: 52. How did Christ act when he was beaten? 1 Pet. 2: 23. What are we told to do when any one injures us? Matt. 5: 39. What one thing do his subjects always do? 37. Do *you* hear that voice? What did Pilate say about Christ? Was *he* one of Christ's subjects? Are *you?*

LESSON OUTLINE.

THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM.

THE KING.

1.—QUESTIONED.

a. By Pilate:

"Art thou the King of the Jews?" 33.
"What hast thou done?" 35.
"What is the Truth?" 38.
"Whence art thou?" 19: 9.
"Knowest thou not I have power to crucify thee?" 19: 10.

b. By Herod, Priests, and People:

"Questioned with him in many words." Luke 23: 9.
"Art thou the Christ?" Mark 14: 61.
"Who is it that smote thee?" Luke 22: 64.
"Art thou then the Son of God?" Luke 22: 70.

c. Why Questioned:

"Sayest thou this thing of thyself?" 34.
"Saying he himself is Christ a king." Luke 23: 2.
"Jesus perceived—would make him a king." 6: 15.
"Blessed is the king of Israel." 12: 13.

d. His Answers:

1.—To Pilate:

"Thou sayest I am a king." 37.
"My kingdom is not of this world." 36.
"To this end was I born." 37.
"Jesus gave him no answer. 19: 9.

2.—To Herod, Priests, and People:

"He answered him nothing." Luke 23:9.

"And Jesus said, I am." Mark 14:62.

"If I tell you ye will not believe." Luke 22:67.

"The Son of man—right hand of power." Mark 14:62.

"Ye say that I am." Luke 22:70.

c. The Answers of Prophecy:

"The government shall be upon his shoulder." Is. 9:6.

"A King shall reign." Jer. 23:5.

"There was given him dominion." Dan. 7:14.

"Behold thy king cometh." Zech. 9:9.

"The throne of his father, David." Luke 1:32.

"Where is he that is born king?" Matt. 2:2.

2.—REJECTED.

"Thine own nation—have delivered thee." 35.

"He came unto his own—received him not." 1:11.

"We will not have this man to reign." Luke 19:14

"No man receiveth his testimony." 3:32.

"He is despised and rejected of men." Is. 53:3.

3.—DECLARED INNOCENT.

"I find in him no fault at all." 38.

"Having examined—have found no fault." Luke 23:14.

"Have found no cause of death in him." Luke 23:22.

"He knew that for envy they had delivered him." Matt. 27:18.

"Am innocent of the blood of this just person." Matt. 27:24.

"Truly this was the Son of God." Matt. 27:54.

HIS KINGDOM.

1.—ITS NATURE.

"My kingdom is not of this world." 36.

"Not meat and drink, but righteousness." Rom. 14:17.

"Flesh and blood can not inherit." 1 Cor. 15:50.

"Is of the truth." 37.

2.—ITS SUBJECTS.

a. Are Peaceful:

"Of this world then would my servants fight." 36.

"Put up again thy sword." Matt. 26:52.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." Rom. 12:19.

"Weapons of our warfare are not carnal." 2 Cor. 10:4.

b. Hear His Voice:

"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." 37.

"Every man that hath heard—cometh unto me." 6:45.

"Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep." 10:26.

"My sheep hear my voice." 10:27.

"He that is of God heareth God's words." 8:47.

"If any man will do his will he shall know." 7:17.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

PRELIMINARY.—In the arrangement of the lessons for this year several connecting links are dropped out between the last lesson and the present one. We do not as we did last year, look into Gethsemane and behold the disciples sleeping while their Master is in such agony of anguish; we pass by the treacherous betrayal, the flight of the disciples, the midnight procession to the house of Annas, the adjournment to the palace of Caiaphas, his trial by day-break before the Sanhedrim,—all these, and more, are omitted in our lessons, but nevertheless should be recalled to the scholars in order that the chain of events may be complete in their memory. Jesus was sent to Herod by Pilate—an event which, probably, properly follows after the 38th verse of our chapter, the history being again resumed in verse 39.

THE KING.—He was a king. Though not such an earthly potentate as the Jews, from their unspiritual interpretation of the prophecies were led to expect, yet he was a king in a super-eminent sense—"King of kings and Lord of lords." Hannah, it will be remembered, was inspired to sing of Christ as the coming King. 1 Sam. 2:10. After her day the prophecies of the approaching time of one who was to sit upon the throne of an everlasting kingdom became more and more numerous. In addition to those given in the Lesson Outline, see Num. 24:17; 2 Sam. 7:12; 1 Chr. 17:11; Ps. 2:6; 45:1, 6; 72:1; 89:36; Is. 61:1; Dan. 9:26; Micah 5:2. So numerous were these prophetic indications that when he came the Magi of the east enquired: "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" Matt. 2:5. And so circumstantial were they, that, when Herod, troubled by the enquiry, demanded where he was to be born, the chief priests and scribes, quoting from Micah 5:2, were enabled without hesitation to say: "In Bethlehem of Judea." Matt. 2:5, 6. Nathanael, when convinced that he actually was the Messiah, therefore, most naturally exclaimed: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, the king of

Israel." John 1:49. Looking for a King whose kingdom was to be everlasting, it is not surprising that the Jews, who always regarded themselves as the peculiar treasure of the Lord, should he led to regard that coming kingdom as one which should confer dominion and power and prosperity upon themselves, nor that their eyes should be so blinded by this vision of glory that they could not see their King in this man of sorrows, who had no earthly throne and who refused all chances of one. And yet had they searched the prophecies with lowlier hearts they might have seen in this same one, whom they rejected, the Anointed for whom they longed—"the chief among ten thousand" and "the one altogether lovely."

QUESTIONED.—He was questioned by Pilate as to whether he was "King of the Jews." His inquiry was based upon the indictment that the chief-priests and the scribes had laid before him, in which they declared, "We find this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ, a king." In regard to two things had they falsified in this charge. Few teachers need to be told that he had not forbidden to give tribute to Cæsar, but had said instead "Render unto Caesar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's." Matt. 22:21. By the possession of the tribute money they acknowledged the authority of Cæsar, and Christ's command was as if he had said, You acknowledge your subjection to Cæsar, therefore render to him the obedience of subjects, but as God still has the right to the fealty of your souls, render unto him the worship of your hearts. Before Pilate his accusers also charged against him: "He stirreth up all the people, teaching throughout all Jewry." Luke 23:5. A strange complaint to lay before a Roman governor! To this they add the indeffinite accusation that he is a "malefactor." 30. But though these were the charges preferred before Pilate, they were not those upon which they sought to convict him before the Sanhedrim, and upon which that body passed judgment upon him. First they sought false witness, but found no two that agreed even as to the subject matter of his offense, and two were necessary by their law to convict him. When they finally found two who agreed as to the subject matter that he had said that if the temple were destroyed in three days he would rebuild it—they so disagreed in particulars (Mark 14:59) that even this corrupt council could not pass sentence on such testimony. Then the high-priests sought by a masterstroke of policy to make Christ convict himself. After all hope of proving him a blasphemer by means of false witnesses had passed away, the high-priest asked him directly, "Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am," and added, "And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." This was what the high-priest desired, and exclaimed: "What need have we of further witnesses?" Mark 14:61-64. He was declared guilty of blasphemy, and so worthy of death. Such a charge before Pilate would have been abortive, and so before him he was charged with attempting to be a king. The second point in which they falsified before him was, that Jesus called himself "Christ a king." The terms Messiah and Christ both mean *The Anointed.* The first is Hebrew, the latter is Greek. Kings were anointed, and the term "The Anointed" was often used with reference to the king. Hence when Jesus claims the title of Christ, they have only to add an interpretation to it to make it seem that he claims the throne of Israel. False as was the accusation as it was presented, the world is indebted to them for having made it. Unless they had so done and pushed it even to the mocking of the royal robe, the reed scepter, and the crown of thorns, we would not have been able so clearly to see how the Old Testament prophesies of the Messiah King were fulfilled in Christ the Saviour. By their action

they made it impossible ever to forget that Christ came as King as well as Sacrifice. And, most singularly and impressively, a King *in* his sacrifice.

The question of Pilate seems to be ironical and sarcastic, rather than grave. The charge of the Jews made it necessary, and it was asked, probably, merely to find out whether he made any claim to be a king, and if so, that he might determine whether he were a harmless lunatic or a dangerous enthusiast. But Pilate was on trial before Christ, as well as Christ before Pilate. Christ's counter-question keenly cuts through all entanglements and lays bare the source of the accusation. "*Dost say this of thyself?*" Am I answering Pilate the Roman governor or a tool of the Jews? *Am I a Jew?* That had touched his pride. *What hast thou done? That* was a Roman inquiry, and befitted a Roman magistrate. But before this sad business is through, Pilate shows that he is as weak as a reed—blown one way by his inclinations, and then just the opposite way by the wrath of the multitude, while, unmoved beside him stands the accused—the Rock of our salvation.

REJECTED.—He was "delivered" unto Pilate by the chief-priests and his own nation. "He came unto his own and his own received him not." They delivered him to Pilate as a plotting king—but they rejected him as the Messiah. They brought him before Pilate, because the power of death had been taken from them. They had only the power to excommunicate, and that, in their present temper, was like mumbling upon him without any teeth. They had a tigerish thirst for blood which nothing could satisfy except the death of its victim. It was a thirst so fierce that Pilate quailed before their cries of "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

HIS KINGDOM.—*Its Nature.*—He acknowledges that he *has* a kingdom, but it is "not of this world," and therefore, Pilate has nothing to fear from it. His Kingdom, however is *in* the world and over it. "If my kingdom were of this world," Jesus says, "then should my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews." Twelve unarmed disciples, none of whom, but Peter, had raised a finger to prevent his arrest or to bring about his rescue, were the sum total of the army that he could call to his aid. Earthly kingdoms must have sterner following and larger hosts, but his kingdom came not by earthly means—neither by succession, election nor conquest. Its nature is not worldly—it is within man. Its guards and supports are not worldly, for its weapons are spiritual. Its designs are not worldly, for its sole aim is to make men better. *Art thou a King, then?* To that question Jesus can but answer in the affirmative. He *is* King of such a kingdom, and assents to the fact in the oriental way, "Thou sayest." And to this end "was he born," that he "might bear witness to the truth." Truth was the end of his kingdom. It was "founded on truth, erected by truth, was to desseminate truth and to develop truth in men." As Satan was the prince of this world, the ruler over the empire of sin or untruth, so Christ was the sovereign of the kingdom of truth. "Thy throne, O God," exclaims the Psalmist, "is forever, and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is aright scepter. Ps. 45:6. If his kingdom had been a different one he would have had a larger following, such as the Roman government might indeed have feared.

Its Subjects.—Peaceful, not warlike nor aggressive. They are made up of those whose ears are quick to catch the truth and to hear the voice of God, whose great concerns are not of this life at all, who are as pilgrims and strangers here seeking a country, that is to say an heavenly, whose treasures are laid up in another world where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal; whose conversation is set on things above—men who are in the world but not of it. It is a marvelous thing that Christ should depend on such unaggressive means to

conquer the world to him. No armies, no influential following, no money, no worldly means whatever — an utterly unpractical leader. "Now," he says, "my kingdom is not from hence," and there was not much prospect that it would ever be otherwise. But there is emphasis on the word "now." It is a declaration that though now it was *not* "from hence," yet the time was coming when it surely would be. And how from that time has it been growing! The little band has become a multitude; the multitude has become a host; the host has gathered to itself other hosts, and without sound of trumpet or of drum, the conquest of love is going on until all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Pilate's Question.—What is Truth? It is hardly possible that Pilate is impressed by the sayings of one who claims to rule only over such an intangible realm. He, indeed, asks the question, but immediately turns upon his heel, as if it could not be answered, or as if the answer were of no moment. It was the sneering, frivolous exclamation of a "practical" man of the world. It showed that he had no hope of ever learning what the truth was. And yet, O Pilate, and skeptics and doubters everywhere, who, like him, are asking the same question, there stands one before you who is himself The Truth. "If any man shall do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." But Pilate and all self-satisfied skeptics are not of those who are of the truth, and therefore hear not his voice.

Declared Innocent. — With this mocking question upon his lips, Pilate, probably esteeming Jesus to be a harmless visionary, goes out to tell the Jews that he finds no fault in him. At this they become more fierce, declaring that he "stirreth up" the people, teaching throughout all Jewry. Hearing that Christ is a Galilean, and wishing to heal the feud between him and Herod, and at the same time to get rid of a troublesome matter, Pilate sends him to Herod, who properly has jurisdiction over the case. Though Herod mocks him, he returns him without sentence to Pilate thereby also declaring him innocent. Pilate again brings him forth and again says that he finds no fault in him. Three times does he thus aver his innocence, and finally he washes his hands of the blood of this "just person." There seems to be a Providence in these frequent official declarations. The Innocent was to die for the guilty. Here is unimpeachable testimony that he died for no mere political offence. We look upon his life and see the Holy One of Israel; we look upon his trial and judgment and the records bear testimony that here is the Lamb without blemish and without spot that was slain for the sins of the world.

Crumbs from the Table.

1.—The great question of this time and of all times is the one which the high-priest asked of Jesus: "*Art thou the Christ?*" Every one must answer that question for himself. But what momentous issues hang upon its decision! No one cometh unto the Father but by him — there is no other name under heaven whereby one can be saved. *Jesus himself answers this question in the affirmative.* He was crucified because he claimed to be the Son of God. Mark 14:61, 62; John 8:28, 58; 10:30; 14:6, 7, 9; 17:5; 19:7.

2.—If the decision be adverse to his claims, nevertheless will those who now reject him see him "sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." And that day will be a day of judgment and of wrath. "Kiss the Son lest he be angry and ye perish from the way." Is. 13:6-9; 34:8; Joel 1:15; Mal. 3:2; 4:1; Matt. 24:30; Luke 23:30; Rev. 1:7; 6:15-17.

3.—The Jews accused Christ before Pilate of attempting to be king. Pilate in irony nailed that title on the cross. Pilate, the wicked judge, testified to the innocence of the accused. And so by the rage of the multitude and in spite of the weakness of the judge, the kingship of Christ in the one case was established, and, in the other, a certificate of innocence was obtained. Who, seeing these things, will not say that God can make even the wrath of man to praise him? Gen. 50:20; Ex. 18:11; Ps. 76:10; Acts 2:36.

4.—How much truth has to do with Christ and his kingdom! He is "full of truth." 1:14. Speaks the truth. 8:45. *Is himself* the truth. 14:6; 7:18. His disciples are to worship him in spirit and in truth. 4:24. Are to be guided by the Holy Spirit

into all truth. 16: 13. Are to rejoice in truth. 1 Cor. 13: 6. Meditate upon truth. Phil. 4: 8. Are to be sanctified by truth. 17: 17, 19. Be purified by it. 1 Pet. 1: 22. And it is part of the Christian armor. Eph. 6: 14.

5.—What a falsification that was—to declare the Lord innocent, and yet to crucify him. And yet it is exactly paralleled by those who say that Christ was guiltless of deception, and yet affirm that he was only a man. He too plainly claimed to be the Son of God to admit of such a statement. Either he was what he claimed to be or he was an impostor. John 1: 1; Rom. 9: 5; 1 Cor. 2: 8; 15: 47; 1 John 4: 9; Rev. 22: 13.

HYMN.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
We at his feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all.

BLACKBOARD.

Christ's Kingdom is
NOT OF THIS WORLD.
HE IS
KING OF KINGS and
LORD OF LORDS.
Ruler over our Hearts.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Recall the story of Christ in Gethsemane: His agony—his sleeping disciples—his prayer—betrayal—his being hurried at midnight before Annas, then before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim, and then before Pilate. What was he charged with before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim? They sought for all sorts of accusations, but found no two witnesses that in any way agreed, until two said that if the temple should be pulled down he would rebuild it in three days. (Explain what he did say.) But they could not convict him on this, for even these two witnesses did not agree. What did they convict him on? Why, the high-priest finally asked him if he were the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, and of course he had to say yes, and then they said he was worthy of death. Then they brought him to Pilate—and accused him of pretending to be the Son of God? Oh no! they accused him of trying to be King of the Jews.

2.—But he was a King. He told Pilate so, but he told him that his kingdom was "not of this world." He was king over no earthly kingdom. His kingdom is *within our hearts*, not a government over our bodies. Satan has a kingdom, also. What does he rule over? His is the kingdom of sin and untruth. Christ's kingdom is the kingdom of holiness and of truth. Earthly kingdoms have thrones, officers, armies, navies, etc. (Draw out this contrast in full, showing that Christ relied upon love only to extend his kingdom.)

3.—Yes, and the subjects are different. Christ's subjects do not fight. (Read that part of verse 36.) They hear Christ's voice. (Read that part of verse 37.) Christ's voice says: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," etc. (Read all of Matt. 5: 44.) Who hears and obeys that? No one but those who love Christ. He says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart," etc. Who hears that? (Tell them other things that Christ bids people do, and so, show who do and who do not hear Christ's voice.) Especially press the point: Is he *my* King?

MEMORY VERSES.

Christ is my Prophet, Priest and King;
My Prophet full of light,
My great High Priest before the throne,
My King of heavenly might.

For he indeed is Lord of lords,
And he the King of kings;
He is the Sun of Righteousness,
With healing in his wings.

BLACKBOARD.

CHRIST'S SERVANTS
DO NOT FIGHT.
They HEAR HIS VOICE and
FOLLOW HIM.
IS HE MY KING?

LESSON XLVIII.—NOV. 28, 1875.—JESUS ON THE CROSS.

SCRIPTURE.—John **19 : 25-30.** Commit **26-30**; Primary Verse, **30.**

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were not accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—ISAIAH 53: 6.

TOPIC.—Christ Lifted Up.

HOME READINGS.

M. Ps. 22 : 1-18.....Christ to be Mocked.
T. Is. 53 : 1-12 .....To be Scourged.
W. Ps. 109 : 1-31..... .To become a Reproach.
Th. Is. 50 : 1-11.....To be Spit Upon.
F. Is. 52 : 1-15.....His Visage to be Marred.
S. Zech. 13 : 1- 9 .....His Hands to be Wounded.
S. Zech. 12 : 1-11.....His Side to be Pierced.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

CHRIST'S ENEMIES.—What did the *rulers* do to Christ on the cross? Luke 23: 35. Beside crucifying him how else did they try to degrade him? Mark 15: 27. What did those passing by do? Mark 15: 29, 30. What did the chief priests and the scribes say? Mark 15: 31, 32. What else did they and the elders do? Matt. 27: 41-43. When one wanted to quench the thirst of Christ with vinegar what did they say? Matt. 27: 49. What did one of the thieves do? Luke 23: 39. See how many of these things were foretold in the 22d Psalm. Look at Is. 53: 12 and see what was prophesied there that was here fulfilled.

THE SOLDIERS.—What did the soldiers do to him? Luke 23: 36. What did they do when he was thirsty? John 19: 29. Had he had anything like this offered to him before? Mark 15: 23. What did they do with his garments? John 19: 23, 24. See what was foretold about the vinegar in Ps. 69: 21. What about the garments in Ps. 22: 18. What, finally, did the centurion and those that were with him say about Jesus? Matt. 27: 54.

HIS FRIENDS.—Where did his friends stand? Luke 23: 49. *Who* stood "afar off"? Matt. 27: 55, 56; Mark 15: 40, 41. Was *this* ever prophesied? Ps. 38: 11. Did his friends stand afar off all the time? 25. Who was it that stood near the cross? 25, 26. Who was the disciple whom Jesus loved? Who, during the crucifixion, became one of his friends? Luke 23: 39-42.

HIMSELF.—What did Christ do when he was on the cross for his enemies? Luke 23: 34. How does that agree with his teaching in Matt. 5: 44? What did he say to the repentant thief? Luke 23: 43. What did he say to his mother? 26. What terrible cry did he utter? Mark 15: 34. What were the last two things he said? 30; Luke 23: 46. When the stupefying drink was offered him did he take it? Mark 15: 23. Did he act on the cross as you think the Son of God would act? Do you love him for being so forgiving, so thoughtful, so loving in his death?

THE SIGNS.—What happened about the sixth hour? Luke 23: 44, 45. How long did the darkness last? How much was the vail rent? Mark 15: 38. What else took place? Matt. 27: 51-53. Do you think all this would have happened if Christ had been a mere man?

LESSON OUTLINE.

JESUS ON THE CROSS.

"Then shall ye know that I am he." 8: 28.

HIS ENEMIES.

a. Before the Cross:

"With him they crucify two thieves." Mark 15: 27.

"One of the malefactors—railed on him." Luke 23. 39.

"The rulers also derided him." Luke 23: 35.

"Save thyself and come down." Mark 15: 30.

"He saved others; himself he can not save.' Mark 15: 31.

"Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now." Mark 15: 32.

"Let us see whether Elias will come." Matt. 27: 49.

"He trusted in God, let him deliver him." Matt. 27: 43.

b. In Prophecy:

"He was numbered with the transgressors." Is. 53: 12.

"Laugh me to scorn," "shoot out the lips," "shake the head." Ps. 22: 7.

"The abjects gathered themselves against me." Ps. 35: 15.

"He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver." Ps. 22: 8.

c. After His Death:

"Smote their breasts and returned." Luke 23: 48.

THE SOLDIERS.

a. In Prophecy.

"In my thirst they gave me vinegar." Ps. 69: 21.

"Part my garments—cast lots upon my vesture." Ps. 22: 18.

"Shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Zech. 12: 10.

"Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." Ex. 12: 46.

b. In Fulfillment:

"The soldiers, also, mocked him." Luke 23: 36.

"They filled a sponge with vinegar." John 19: 29.

"Parted his garments, casting lots." Mark 15: 24.

"One of the soldiers — pierced his side." John 19: 34.

"They brake not his legs." John 19: 33.

c. Their Verdict:

"Certainly this was a righteous man." Luke 23: 47.

"Truly this was the Son of God." Matt. 27: 54.

HIS FRIENDS.

"A great company of people and of women." Luke 23: 27.

"Many women — beholding afar off." Matt. 27: 55, 56.

"There stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother." John 19: 25, 26.

"Lord, remember me." Luke 23: 42.

HIMSELF.

a. Love for His Enemies:

"Father, forgive them." Luke 23: 34.

b. Love for His Friends:

"Wine mingled with myrrh, but he received it not." Mark 15: 23.

"Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves." Luke 23. 28–31.

"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke 23: 43.

"Woman, behold thy Son." John 19: 26.

"Behold thy mother." John 19: 27.

c. His Sufferings:

"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" Mark 15: 34.

"I thirst." 28.

"It is finished." John 19: 30.

"Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke 23: 46.

d. Fulfillments of:

"In my thirst they gave me vinegar." Ps. 69: 21.

"Pray for them that despitefully use you." Matt. 5: 44.

"Why art thou so far from helping me?" Ps. 22: 1.

"The Son of man must suffer." Mark 8: 31.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent." John 3: 14.

"I go to the Father." 16: 16.

"I have finished the work." 17: 4.

THE SIGNS.

"There was darkness over all the earth." Luke 23: 44.

"The vail of the temple was rent — from top to bottom." Mark 15. 38.

"Earth did quake, and the rocks rent." Matt. 27: 51.

"Many bodies of the saints—arose." Matt. 27: 52.

"Together with my dead body shall they arise." Is. 26: 19.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CRUCIFIXION.—*The Accounts.*—One of the most remarkable things in the accounts given by the evangelists is the severe simplicity of each narration. If they had been judicial records of the event they could not have been less tinged with feeling. There are no denunciations of Pilate nor of the mocking Jews. There is no dramatic setting forth of the trial nor of the crucifixion itself. There is no attempt to touch our sympathies for the divine sufferer by portraying his agony upon the cross. Each one is content merely to state what was said and what was done, and that, too, in the fewest possible words. If these men had been put upon the witness stand, and, in the most solemn manner, sworn to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," they could not have been more careful to leave out everything superfluous, and to give only the bare facts and not their interpretation of them. And yet the finest art could not have done so much as their simplicity. We see the cowardly vacillation of Pilate the more plainly that it is not hidden by their reproaches; we perceive the cruel malice of the Jews the more distinctly that it is not obscured by their denunciations, and we see the cross and its burden the more clearly that we do not look at it through their tears.

The Cross—Was not, probably, a Jewish mode of punishment. It was, indeed, recognized in the Mosaic law, but such a special curse was affixed to it as virtually to have secured its prohibition.

Deut. 21:23. That the Egyptians practiced it is shown by Joseph's prophesy of the death of the chief baker. Gen. 40: 18, 19. It was this sort of punishment which Haman, the Persian, deservedly suffered. Esth. 7:10. It was prevalent among the Greeks and Romans down to the fourth century. No Roman citizen, however, was permitted to suffer its degradation. It was reserved for slaves and the worst of criminals. Its presence among the Jews was a degrading mark of their subjection to their haughty conquerors. It helps to show the intensity of their hatred to Christ that they would so fiercely demand that a Jew should be made to undergo a death that dishonored the whole nation as well as the victim. But whatever Jesus touched became ennobled. He touched the sick and they became well, the blind and they saw, the dead and they came to life. And so he touched this symbol of disgrace and it became the symbol of honor.

Faithful cross! above all other,
One and only noble Tree;
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peers may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron,
Sweetest weight is hung on thee!

Its Suffering.—The agony of the cross was so great that Cicero denounced this mode of death as most horrible and cruel, and declared that it ought never to be employed. The condemned was nailed to the cross while it was lying upon the ground. When it was lifted up and plunged into its socket there was a terrible wrench that often dislocated some of the joints, and was felt most terribly in the pierced hands and feet. Previous to the crucifixion itself came the scourging, which was done with a whip, attached to which were small cords, upon which were pieces of metal. These sank into the flesh, bruising it and lacerating it at every stroke. Often the victim died while it was being administered. The wounds thus made, of course, soon festered and became feverish. The sufferer was exposed to the direct rays of a tropical sun that beat upon his head without mercy. Terrible shooting and aching pains traversed his body, a dreadful oppression crazed his brain, a raging fever surged through his veins, he was seized with an intolerable thirst, flies clustered upon the opened lips of the wounds, and sometimes the impatient birds of prey tore them open still wider. Human cruelty, ever most ingenious, could hardly have invented a torture more exquisite. In the Psalmist's prophesy of the crucifixion, how well he described its anguish:

I am poured out like water,
And all my bones are out of joint.
My heart is like wax;
It is melted in the midst of my bowels.
My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws,
And thou hast brought me
Into the dust of death. Ps. 22: 14, 15.

Usually death delayed its coming from twelve hours to four days. The speedy death of Jesus was a surprise to Pilate and to the soldiers. Why should he die so soon? The long vigil, the agony and the bloody sweat of Gethsemane are the answer. Christ died not so much of his sufferings upon the cross as of a broken heart.

The Place—Called Golgotha or Calvary, both meaning a skull. Whether it was so named because the hill was shaped like a skull, or because frequent crucifixions had given it that unenviable title is indeterminable. Three localities are supported as the place of crucifixion. One is that covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This has the support of long tradition. Over the second stands the Mosque of Omar, called the Dome of the Rock, situate on Mount Moriah, and underneath which is a large cave which well might have been a sepulchre. Ferguson, for architectural reasons, claims this to be the site. The third is the grotto of Jeremiah, about forty rods north-east of the Damascus Gate. As a guard against place and relic worshiping, happily the exact locality can not be accurately determined. Many would worship the place of the cross and Christ's last resting-place who would not worship himself. All that we know certainly about it is that it was "without the gate" (Heb. 13:

12, 13), "near the city" (19: 20) and, probably, close by the highway. Mark 15: 29. How, too, has Calvary been exalted by the same wonderful means that glorified the cross! From being a vile place, whose very name was a by-word and a reproach, it has come to be the synonym for sanctity, a name of honor, and is "the hill from whence cometh my help."

On the Cross.

HIS ENEMIES.—Why was there such an overmastering anger toward Christ? Why did the Jews spit upon, buffet, mock, and deride him with such venomous bitterness? Had they ever served other criminal so? They were tolerant of Barabbas, a real criminal—why were they so vindictive toward Christ? The only answer to this is, that evil is always antagonistic to holiness. His evident goodness woke to fury the evil that was in them, his gentleness, which could not, however, be overcome, exasperated them still more, and his innocence was his worst condemnation. Their action gives special emphasis to the truth that "the carnal mind is enmity against God."

To add to the degradation that they would heap upon him, he was crucified between two thieves, himself the central, and, by inference, therefore, the worst of the three. The two thieves represent the two classes into which the world is divided—both guilty, but one justly suffers, while the other asks and obtains mercy. Crucifying him between two thieves was one of Pilate's expedients for taunting the Jews. He had been compelled by them to do what he did not want. He takes his revenge by assuming Christ really to be the king that they merely charged him with trying to be. As such he places him between two thieves, thereby intimating that this is the way he would do if Christ actually were their king. He advertises his taunt by having it written in three languages upon the cross that "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." And when some of the chief-priests would have him change the inscription so that it should read: "He *said*, I am King of the Jews," he refused, saying, "What I have written, I have written." 21, 22. It was written in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. The first was the language of the court, the second the popular tongue and was the language of culture, and the last was the language of religion. All the world was thus advertised of the fact that Jesus died as King of the Jews. And so it was an unconscious prophecy of a coming period when the laws of all lands should declare Christ to be King of kings and Lord of lords, when the popular voice should re-echo the cry, and all worship everywhere should be centered upon this divine King.

THE SOLDIERS.—One of the notable contrasts is between the Saviour on the cross and the soldiers beneath it—between his agony and their unfeeling raffling over his garments. *Took his garments.* His upper garments, including, probably, the girdle, sandals, and, perhaps, the linen shirt. These were "divided," but when they came to the tunic, the seamless garment worn next the body, as this could not be divided, they "cast lots" as to which one should have it. This has been used as a pertinent illustration of the fact that we can share all our outward Christian privileges, but when it comes to Christ's inner robe—the robe of righteousness—every soul must have *that* undivided. Was there ever one who left fewer worldly possessions than did Christ? Who is so poor that Christ can not share an equal poverty with him? Who wanders more homeless than he who said: "The foxes have holes, but the Son of man has not where to lay his head"? Behold the poor Testator!—Jesus; his legacy—nothing but his garments; his heirs-at-law—his bitterest enemies. But how precious is the legacy! He left nothing but his garments, but they were the robes of righteousness! He who has them "shall inherit all things." And he left them for his enemies. He was unclothed that they might be clothed upon.

HIS FRIENDS.— In the four gospels there are three companies of friends spoken of. First is the "great company of people and of women which also bewailed and lamented him," mentioned by Luke. 23: 27–32. There was in Jerusalem a benevolent association of women formed to alleviate the sufferings of those who were condemned to die upon the cross. These followed the doomed to the place of execution, and administered to him a stupefying drink of wine and myrrh, to blunt his susceptibility to pain. This explains the "vinegar mingled with gall" offered to and refused by Christ, and shows how it came to be presented to him. It was these persons that, after the easy fashion of that country, "bewailed and lamented him." And he rebuked them saying: "Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children." Sentimental tears of sympathy, instead of tears of repentance, he did not want. Then, too, they bewailed him because of his approaching shameful death. On that score he did not wish their tears, for he "for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." Not he, but they were the ones to be lamented, for a dreadful doom lay before them — the destruction of Jerusalem, and the great day of the wrath of the Lamb. Both are referred to in his reply. See, for comment, Is. 2: 10, 19, 21; Rev. 6: 16, 17.

Another group, and, this time, his real friends, was that which stood by the cross. And who compose it? We should expect to see there the most valiant of the disciples. We should expect that they who were with him daily for three years would be nearest the cross, and the timid women, who only occasionally shared his councils, standing affrighted afar off. But the reverse is true. The strong are fled, but the weak maintain their ground. Four women—the three Marys and Salome—and John are all that are near him. But the most touching figure before the cross is that of Mary, the mother. When her mysterious Son was yet a child, it was told her by devout Simeon: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." Luke 2: 35. And now the predicted time had come. The scene of Mary at the cross is one that has always touched the heart. The marvelous *Sabat Mater dolorosa* of Jacopone, so wonderfully interpreted in music by Haydn, though chargeable with Mariolatry, is a testimony of the way in which it has affected the hearts of multitudes of people. That and *Dies Iræ* are likely to have a perennial existence. Then was her hour of anguish—but how soon it gave place to one of triumph!

The third group is one composed of "many women," mentioned by Matthew and Mark as "beholding afar off" at the time the Saviour died. Looking among the names we see again two of the Marys, but not the mother-Mary, nor the name of John. It would appear that the faithful five, for some reason, had retired from before the cross, joining the greater body of mourners who, more timidly, had stood aloof, and that John had taken his new and sacred charge immediately to his own house.

HIMSELF.—And, now, how restful it is to turn away from the hate of his enemies, the brutality of the soldiers, the weakness of most of his friends, and even the sorrow of the faithful few, to the divine countenance of Jesus himself. Hate, brutality, weakness, and sorrow find in him just their overcoming opposites. He came forth bearing his cross. "Why that," exclaims *Gossner*, "was *our* cross, and he appropriated it to himself as though it were his own. He embraced it with such love and patience as it had been his life—and it brought *him* death, but to *us* life." "He was lifted up," says *Henry*, "between heaven and earth, because we were unworthy of either and abandoned by both." It was on his way to the cross that he told the daughters of Jerusalem not to weep for him but for themselves and their children. That was the first instance of his self-forgetfulness. Their doom was more terrible to him, even with the cross in

sight, than his own. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," was spoken, in all probability, while they were driving the cruel spikes through his hands and feet. He refused the narcotic drink in order that he might have full possession of his senses and so be enabled to hear the cry of the thief for mercy, and with due care provide a home for his mother. Though himself in a place of torture, he administered comfort to his repentant fellow-sufferer, with the assurance that this day he should be with him in paradise. Paradise!—what a thought that was to the poor, racked robber! As faithful to his mother upon earth as to his Father in heaven, he arranges for her future comfort in the midst of his extreme sufferings. It was only when the beginning of the end was nigh that he thought of himself at all. Just before the final pangs he cried, *I thirst.* It was the last resting place that he had this side the goal—it was the only one he asked for. It was not made, as one might wrongly infer, *in order* that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. The evangelist merely means to say that this was the only thing lacking to the complete fulfillment of prophecy, for that was prophesied in Ps. 69: 21. The drink that was this time offered him was not the stupefying potion first presented, but simply the common soldier's drink of sour wine. But the most remarkable words that fell from his lips and that have in them the most of hope for mankind, were the declaration: IT IS FINISHED! What is it that was finished? All Scripture was fulfilled (Luke 18: 31; 22: 37); the sacrifice was complete; "Love's redeeming work was done;" the will of God was accomplished (Heb. 10: 7-10); God's work was consummated (4: 34); his sufferings were over; and, lastly, all malice had spent its force—and on the Saviour instead of the sinner. All, apparently, was lost—all, in reality, was won. Then came that terrible cry, impossible for mortals to understand or fathom: *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* And then, it is said, "he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." He bowed his head, but as has been beautifully said, he rested it on his Father's bosom. *Gave up.* Christ was a volunteer even in death. "I lay down my life"—"no man taketh it from me." Could Christ be more godlike upon the cross than he was? Is there anything wherein you would have had him different? Could he have been more self-forgetful, more loving, more patient, more heroic—more *divine?*" He had said: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he." We pause before the cross, and, beholding such resignation, such compassion, such forgiveness, such self-forgetfulness, and such love, we, with the centurion, are compelled to say: "*Truly this was the Son of God!*"

Crumbs from the Table.

1.—"He saved others, himself he can not save." To save *himself* is not what he came for. He found his life in losing it for the sake of others. He came to save the very ones who derided him. "He saved others"—he could have saved them—he can save me. Jer. 23: 6; Matt. 1: 21; 18: 11; John 1: 29; 3: 16; 12: 47; Acts 4: 12; 5: 30, 31; 10: 43; 1 Tim. 1: 15; Tit. 2: 14.

2.—"His hour" at last had come. But how much more like his enemies' hour it seemed than his own. They indeed had their hour, but it was a short one. The hour of Christ, with whom a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, was not to be counted off on the dial plate of any Jewish clock. His "hour" meant all eternity. The centurion was the first to announce that his death was a triumph, and soon the news spread that the crucified was risen. His hour of reign had begun, and that shall never end. Ps. 22: 27, 28; Dan. 2: 34, 35, 44; 7: 13, 14, 18, 27; Zech. 14: 9; Rev. 11: 15.

3.—"Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves." The sinner's doom is worse than was the Saviour's. Prov. 1: 24-33; Is. 2: 19; Hos. 10: 8; Rev. 6: 17; 9: 6.

4.—They hated Christ—and they "hated him without cause." Speaking prophetically the Psalmist said, "They that hate me without cause are more than the hairs of mine head." Ps. 69: 4. "For my love they are my adversaries," "They have rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love." Ps. 109: 4, 5. When asked: "*What evil hath he done?* they cried out the more, *Crucify him! Crucify him!*" So men would hate God just in the same way—*did* hate him in the person of Christ. John 15: 24, 25; Rom. 1: 30; 8: 7.

5.—Is there nothing for us to crucify? Is there not something that should take the place left

vacant by Christ on the cross? Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20); "Our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6); "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Gal. 5:24.

BLACKBOARD.

The Son of God
WAS WOUNDED,
Crowned with Thorns,
Thirsted on the Cross,
DIED,

That we Might
BE HEALED,
Crowned with Immortality,
Drink of the Water of Life,
LIVE.

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Put a cross on the board and ask what it was for. Is it in use now? How were people fastened upon it? Were they nailed upon it when it was lying down or when it was standing up? How would it hurt to be crucified? Having drawn out from them all they know, tell what sufferings were endured by the crucified. For help in this see Notes and Comments.

2.—Question them as to what his enemies did to Christ. Scourged — spit upon — buffeted — made sport of him by putting on him a mock royal robe, a crown of thorns, and put in his hand a reed for a scepter—made him carry his heavy cross when he was too weak to do so—drove the nails through his hands and his feet—lifted him up on the cross and then mocked him — called him King of the Jews—told him to come down from the cross if he could—said he saved others, but could not save himself. Those that passed by wagged their heads and made sport of him.

3.—And the soldiers — what did they do? Mocked him, also. They divided his upper garments among them and cast lots to see which would have his seamless under-garment. (Each one must have Christ's robe of righteousness undivided.) Call their attention to how poor these garments showed Jesus to be. After his death one of the soldiers pierced his side. And when he died and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent, they began then to realize who it was on the cross, and they said: "Truly this was the Son of God."

4.—Where were his friends? Whom would you expect to be close by his cross and who afar off, looking on? The men near by and the women far off? No. The women were near by; only one man was with them. Who do you think that man was? It was John — whom Jesus loved. Mary Magdalene was there, Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and her sister.

5.—What did Christ do? When they nailed him to the cross he prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When they mocked him he said nothing back. The crucified thief asked to be remembered when he came into his kingdom and he told him: "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Tell what he did for his mother—his thirst—his last cry—"*It is finished!*" He had finished his work of love for us—had died that we might live.

MEMORY VERSE.

Why was Jesus crucified
On the cross of Calvary?
Hark! the answer from his lips:
"Child I lived and died for thee;
Stripes I bore that you might be
Free from slavery of sin.
In the grave I went that you
Might God's city enter in."

BLACKBOARD.

Why was Christ
CRUCIFIED?
He was Crucified
FOR ME.

Editorial Miscellany

That last Review Exercise was unprecedentedly popular. The orders came in so fast that double the number at first resolved upon was printed. Soon they were all exhausted, and still the demands for more kept coming in. All orders were filled that could be responded to, but, at the last, there were many that the publishers were obliged to disappoint. They will issue a larger number to begin with next time; but if you want to be absolutely sure of getting your order filled—send in early. One good friend writes from Michigan, relative to it: "Its divisions seem perfect, its arrangement complete, and I search in vain for that which shall add to its merit or contribute to its interest." Many others have spoken in a like way, and the general desire seems to be to have a similar exercise for next review day.

While we are speaking of reviews we would like to say that if they ever become universally a success, we shall owe it to one man more than to all others. There is one who early exhibited his faith in reviews, was one of the first to show the public that they were really feasible, interesting, and indispensable, demonstrated the fact first in his own school, then prepared charts for the guidance of others, for the *Sunday School World*, and, for a time, occupied the field almost alone. The first initials of that man's name, as Parson Brownlow would say, is—John B. Smith, of East Hartford, Conn.

Those of our readers who dutifully turn to the lessons first, have already found out that we have ventured on a new experiment in preparing the lessons. Those who eat their dessert first and roast beef afterwards will find each lesson preceded by a Biblical Lesson Outline, which, we believe, will be warmly welcomed by every real, earnest teacher. We can conceive of no better or more compact way of making the Bible explain the lessons we are studying than by preparing such a Lesson Outline. In writing the lessons it is invariably true that for want of space we are obliged to throw away fully as much material as we use. This Outline saves some of that matter and also gives room for a portion of it in the Notes and Comments, by making some of the latter unnecessary. As we always like to give credit, even for suggestions, we are glad to say that we are in the main—though not wholly—indebted for the idea to the excellent similar outline prepared for the *Normal Class*, by that flying affair, the "Plainfield Railroad Normal Class."

Our readers will remember our reference of this Summer to the pauper girl, "Margaret," the "mother of criminals." She "was born in Ulster County, New York, of poor and dissipated parents, grew up without home of her own and without being able to gain admittance to any. Of course she went to the bad. The United States Commissioner of Education has caused a thorough investigation to be made of this case. Margaret has had 834 lineal descendants, only 125 of whom have become in any way reputable members of society. Of that other larger portion, 106 were of illegitimate birth, 164 were prostitutes, 17 were keepers of houses of ill-fame, 64 were paupers, 76 were criminals, and 142 were beggars. These descendants of hers have committed 115 indictable offences, suffered, in the aggregate, 115 years' imprisonment, and, all told, had what amounts to 734 years of relief. And yet she died only fifty years ago! Ulster County had then, as probably it has now, a very poor conception of the good

or evil that might result from its treatment of this one child. Its churches, in all likelihood, were preaching so vigorously to its grown-up, respectable sinners, that they had no time, nor thought, nor knowledge, even, of this little waif who was not respectable at all. And so, while she was refused a home, and not taught nor encouraged to do better, she was quietly sowing a crop of thorns that have lacerated the feet, the temper, and the pocket-books of the community wherein she lived, for the last fifty years. And, it strikes us, that any neglected boy or girl can, in time, thus supply any county with any amount of costly criminals to order, and keep the churches forever hopelessly laboring with them.

We tremble to think of the qualifications that soon will be considered necessary in a Sunday-school teacher and of the preparation for his class that will be exacted of him. We solemnly warn all ease-loving people not to be entrapped into taking a seat full of girls or boys in a Sunday-school, "just to teach them for a few Sundays." There is no telling what will be the consequences of so innocent and thoughtless an act. The necessity of preparation for the duty will induce study; the study of the lessons will become interesting; money will be expended in obtaining other than the usual helps, until one will find, after a while, that he has a smaller purse and a good theological library on hand; the teachers' meeting will absorb one evening in the week, and study of the lesson and recitation of the scholars will claim very nearly all the rest; one will be going about to conventions to learn better how to do his work, and just as like as not will be a member of a Normal Class. These are a few of the dangers that lurk underneath the apparently simple task of teaching a class of six little ones. And now they are likely to be redoubled. Rev. H. M. Parsons, of Boston, holds *two* teachers' meetings per week, and the Rev. C. H. Toy, D. D., is out in an article in the *Sunday School Times* advising Sunday-school teachers to go through a theological seminary! It is not by the addition of feathers that they propose to break the camel's back.

We arraign our friend Jacobs for heresy! In two public meetings lately he has set himself against quarterly reviews and declared them to be unprofitable affairs. He believes in a weekly review, but not in a quarterly, and, of course, much less in an annual. After once hastily returning to a lesson he would shut all the gates behind him and go on! That is a proceeding which, at least, will make the same lessons seem like unfamiliar ground, should the scholar ever again go over them, and they will "have need that one teach again which be the first principles" they inculcate. After a nail is driven through, one stroke of a hammer on the other side rarely ever perfectly clinches it. One review as rarely ever thoroughly fixes a lesson in the memory. The best teachers in the common schools, academies, and colleges, as well as in the Sunday-school, insist upon the necessity and value of such reviews. They declare that without them the teaching is comparatively worthless. No one would think of mastering any school text-book without often reviewing it, and in each review he finds new profit. Can Mr. Jacobs tell us why a school text-book should be so often reviewed and the Bible lessons only once? It seems to us as if his creed in this matter needs revising. If he refuses to revise his creed, won't he please set right those strong wrong-headed chaps that have made people believe them to be a necessity? We would suggest Dr. Gregory and Dr. Vincent for his first converts.

In England they have had some trouble over a gravestone. A little child died, and the parish rector forbade that the tombstone should show that it was the child of "Rev." ——, because he was

a Wesleyan minister, that title legally belonging only to the clergymen of the Established Church. The matter was taken into the courts and the rector was upheld. Bishop Simpson, lately, in a visit there, before the British Wesleyan Conference, made use of the incident to reach, through it, a better thought. Said he: "I am not so anxious what name shall be written on gravestones as I am about what writing shall be put on the hearts of the youth of this great country." And then he added, with cutting irony: "If you get the name of Jesus written upon their hearts, you may leave the other matter to those whose mission it may be to take care of the tombstones of the land."

UNDER its new management the *Sunday School Times* has notably improved. That unsightly head has given place to a neat, tasty one, and the columns have been widened so that now there are only three on a page. Typographically, it is cleaner and more Christian looking. So much black has disappeared from its first page as to suggest that it has just washed its face! Editorially, the change is manifest in throwing the matter of the paper more into departments, and giving more of the news in condensed items within them. Altogether, the new editor shows an unexpected aptitude for his work. In token of our amity we extend to him publicly — as we already have privately—the feather end of our editorial quill.

WHEN the College boys this year pulled in their famous rowing match, that which doubled the strength of each young athlete and made his sinews like cords of steel was that great, mad, noisy, applauding crowd on the shore. If any of our readers are disposed to turn to the publishers' department and glance over the flattering things that our friends have said of the TEACHER this year, they will see that we have not lacked for a similar incitement to pull *our* last pound. If the laudatory words therein given are at all deserved, we feel sure that it is largely due to the fact that every attempt at improvement has met with so prompt and hearty a recognition. The publishers by no means exhaust their stock of warm commendations that they have on hand. Indeed, they seem hardly to have made a raid on it. Probably we are not wrong in supposing that these kindly words indicate the feeling of thousands of others of our subscribers who yet have made no expression of the fact. We are not accustomed, as our friends will bear us witness, to make any appeals in these columns to increase our circulation. And we will not do so now, further than to suggest that if any of our friends desire to see the usefulness of the TEACHER extended, there is no law against their telling their friends *what* they think of it.

IN a sermon on "The Sunday School Theory," Rev. David Swing told what he thinks of the Sunday-school movement. We "sample" enough of it to show what his judgment is — a judgment, it will be seen, that accords very much with those statistics that we gave awhile ago:

> The quality of the Sunday-school teaching might indeed be improved. But the defect of quality is as nothing compared with the awful defect of quantity. We sing our hymns and speak our words for only a small group of the numberless children of our land. We have no scheme worthy of the length and breadth and grandeur of the country. Our jails are full, our haunts of vice are all full, and chiefly because the streets have for years been full of children whose guardians are poverty and neglect. Our land will remain a battle-ground between criminals and police until the church shall widen out in its ideas of education.
>
> The Sunday-school movement is inadequate. It is too weak for the age and too small for our continent. No one can infer from our present Sunday-school movement anything about the absolute power of the institution itself. These schools of to-day are only samples of design. They are like the twenty-three miles of railway which lay on this great western world in 1830. Just think of it! Twenty-three miles of railway lying on the bosom of this great continent! What could these rails, over which a car could run in an hour, do for a land which reached out thousands of miles toward snow or sun? There are five millions of adults in our country who have never trodden the doorsill of a school-house, and hence who can not read or

write. What must be the number of those children who have never seen that moral beauty called the Sunday-school, who have never had childhood softened by its music, nor manhood affected by its lessons? We have gathered together a few children of the church and have left unloved an army whose numbers only such terms as "millions" can express; we have reversed the Saviour's example; we have clung to the one lamb that is safe, and have left the ninety and nine to wander in the wilderness.

THE "Class-meeting" is one of the important institutions in the Methodist church. No one at all acquainted with the history of Methodism will give it other than a high place in its system. The Sunday-school occupies in it also an equally important place. Now just imagine what trouble there is going to be in that church if it be true, as asserted by Rev. J. I. Buell in the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, that there is "a necessary antagonism" between the class-meeting and the Sunday-school. He says that the Sunday-school draws on the class-meeting for its officers and teachers, creates a tendency to divide the preferences between the two, and claims the hour of the class-meeting for holding its sessions. It would appear to be Mr. Buell's opinion that the Sunday-school won't give up that hour and that the class-meeting must have it. We had never heard of any such irreconcilable clashing until we read Mr. Buell's column-and-a-half argument about it. How the individual churches have managed to keep it quiet and still retain the two colliding forces is what puzzles us.

THEY have Sunday-school concerts in Salt Lake. Brigham Young is alive to the importance of securing the suffrages of the children for Mormonism. Considerable preparation is made for one of these exhibitions. At a late one, the panels in front of the gallery in the great tabernacle were ornamented with mottoes, conspicuous among which were: "Heirs of the priesthood," "Brigham, our leader and friend," "The kingdom is ours," "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet," "Our martyred prophet," and "Utah's best crop—children." The latter announcement seems a little unnecessary. The attendance was about three thousand. The recitations and declamations were somewhat stagy, suggesting the large share that the theater has in educating the children in that city. But the children sang very sweetly, as children always do, though the poetry was of the machine kind, most of it being in style and matter like the following:

Bless Brigham Young, we children pray;
Thy chosen twelve, in what they say;
Thy elders, priests, and teachers, too,
Their labors bless in all they do.

We are the children of the saints,
Of these, the latter days,
When God again has caused to shine,
Truth's bright, effulgent rays.

His kingdom he is building up,
To bear unbounded sway,
That Zion may appear in all his glory.

CHORUS.

Hurrah! hurrah! we'll help the work along;
'Tis expected that the children will perform a noble part,
In rolling on the kingdom on its glory.

How bright have been parental hopes
About what we shall do
In rolling on Jehovah's work,
And helping put it through.

We'll stem the tide of wickedness,
That deluges the world,
That Zion may appear in all his glory.
Chorus: Hurrah, etc.

We're heirs unto the priesthood,
For in it we were born;
By naught but vilest actions
Can we be of it shorn.
We're of the fold of Jesus,
His precious lambs are we,
And, if we are pure-hearted,
His face we soon shall see.

THE First District Convention of Illinois, held at Freeport, in September, came near being a failure, but turned out to be a great success. On the first morning there were only a few discouraged-looking delegates present, whereas, from the large field, there should have been many. The programme was found

to be, under the circumstances, an impractical one. But that changed, and the discussions once fairly opened, the interest and the attendance kept increasing until, at the close, the large church was crowded to its utmost capacity. This convention was so valuable that it is pretty sure that the next will have a larger delegated attendance. The immediate benefit of a district convention is so great in stirring up the counties belonging to it, and in seeing that they are thoroughly and efficiently organized, as to suggest that all states should be thus districted. A state convention can not investigate the condition of each county, nor care for its needs. This a district convention can do, and that state will make the most progress in Sabbath-school work that brings its theories of work and organization to a practical issue in district and county conventions.

AT Freeport the convention resolved itself into a "grumbler's meeting" in which all who had a grievance in the Sunday-school were exhorted to state it then or forever after hold their peace. The president suddenly found that he had started an avalanche. Everybody found something to croak at—except Jacobs. There was nothing he could find fault with in his pastor, his teachers, his chorister, or his librarians. Happy man—may he always deal with perfection! The rest grumbled at everything. At the chorister because "there is too much aimless singing"; at the superintendent because he is "fussy," "in the wrong place," "talks too much," "don't counsel with his teachers," "interferes with the classes;" at the teachers because "they are empty," "have bad eyesight—can't see their scholars on the street," "ask questions from the lesson paper and not from their heart," "work because they have got to," "concave on one side, convex on the other," "don't attend teacher's meeting"; at the pastor because "he don't preach to children," "don't attend teachers' meeting," "don't know the teachers," etc. Such a good humored grumblers' meeting it would be hard to find except in a Sabbath-school convention. Though the truths that were grumbled out there were keen of point, they had no venomous sting in them.

MORE often than people suspect do our really great men unbend themselves and become as children with the children. In no poem has Longfellow more endeared himself than in his "Children's Hour," where this fact, in his case, is charmingly exhibited. The love for little ones manifest in this is fully matched by that which was wont to be shown by Sir Walter Scott for little Marjorie Fleming, the story of whose early death was so touching. Dr. Brown in his *Spare Hours* gives us a delicious bit of a glimpse of their childish jollifications together. For two or three hours at a time the big man and the wee maiden would make the house ring with laughter. After a romp he would set her down in his own big arm-chair before the cheery fire and then stand sheepishly before her to say his "lesson":

> Zicotty, dicotty, dock,
> The mouse ran up the clock;
> The clock struck wan,
> Down the mouse ran,
> Zicotty, dicotty, dock,

This had to be repeated until he could say it without stumbling! Then she gave him another, gravely and slowly timing it upon her little fingers, he repeating it after her, but pretending great difficulty:

> Wonery, twoery, tickery, seven;
> Alibi, crackaby, ten and eleven;
> Pin, pan, muskey dan;
> Tweedle um, twaddle um,
> Twenty-wan. Eerie, orie, ourie—
> You——are——out.

Whenever he made one of his intentional blunders she rebuked him with the most comical mature gravity, treating him as though he were a mere child. He used to say that when he came to "Alibi, crackaby" he always broke down, and "pin, pan, muskey dan, tweedle um, twaddle um" made him roar with laughter.

Ah, that we had more such men!

And yet, were anybody caught in such an act of childish nonsense, ten to one but that his reputation for wisdom would fearfully suffer. Such happy playfulness, in the opinion of everybody, graces departed greatness, but how few there are who could bear to see their favorite minister so unbend himself. And then, too, how few of our would-be great men would not blush like a guilty school-boy to be caught in a pastime so innocent.

Sunday School Gleanings.

THAT "melancholy man," W. F. Sherwin, is wailing now at that rather large number in the Sunday-school whom he calls, "Apathists"—people who are never fired with enthusiasm for anything new, nor are enough opposed to it to fight it. If a teachers' meeting is under discussion they are the ones who "don't know whether it's feasible," "doubt whether all the teachers can be induced to attend," and, as Sherwin says, "vote neither way, and never come again." We have no consolation to offer our sorrowful friend on their behalf. There is only one comforting thing that we can suggest to him—they are, like water, good *to put out* a fire! Sherwin should call them "The Hydropathists."——— A venerable pastor gave to a young student in theology a quaint but significant hint as to the sort of sermons he should preach. Said he: "My young friend, don't fly higher than you can roost." He meant that he should not try to fly higher than he felt at home—not to endeavor to rival those whose strength of wing was far greater than his. If he had been talking to Sunday-school teachers he would have told them not servilely to imitate those inimitable "model lessons" often given in conventions, but to teach, each after his own way.———One of our exchanges in its notes on the lessons says that, "The devil is self-love or evil in the heart, as distinguished from Satan, or falsity in the intellect." The hair-splitting question, then, for debating societies is: "Which is the worst to have—the devil in the heart or Satan in the intellect?" ———Eggleston, in the *Sunday School Times*, acidly wishes that a certain class of teachers would remember that "Vinegar never catches flies."———D. R. Niver, of Albany, especially insists on the importance of the teacher's knowing every member of his class personally and intimately, making, if need be, considerable sacrifice to win one's way into their hearts. And he exhorts from a good pulpit, for he even studied Latin with one young man in order to accomplish that end. By studying a dead language with him he taught him an ever-living one.———The *Sunday School Times* most truly says: "A teacher need not be fluent of speech to be successful. The rough hand may give bread to the needy. The faltering tongue may stammer forth the truth on which the soul may feed and grow strong. The nourishment is in the food, and not in the hand which conveys it."———There is a clergyman, in Vermont, we believe, who, for forty years, has been known as "a children's minister," because, during that time, he has always been in the habit of saying something to the children whenever he saw them in his audiences. Such profit and pleasure has he found in this that now he asks his friends to put nothing on his gravestone but that title. We wish that a few others might earn that appellation.———It is said that there is a superintendent at Washington who often has his scholars sing: "I would not live alway;" and people are inclined to be satirical about it because he is an undertaker. But why should he not express his feelings!

———A writer in *Zion's Herald*, having the impulse of prophecy upon him, is "greatly mistaken if we don't have less of the International lesson sheets, and more of good, sound Methodist teaching in our Sunday-schools by catechisms and otherwise, before many years pass over." As it can not be possible that one would thus speak from an unintelligent and unreasoning hostility to the lesson leaf, we fear that the *Sunday School Journal* has been teaching heresy. Is it possible that Vincent has not been giving "good, sound Methodist teaching" in his journal and its lesson papers! If such a lapse as that has occurred, we see no other way for that denomination to do than to rely on the TEACHER. This journal has never yet been impeached, even by a suggestion. ———The *Christian at Work* congratulates Christian people on "the cessation of much of the Sabbath-school nonsense with which the land has been afflicted." It believes that the last two years has reconstructed the institution, and that "masculine teachers who sit twirling their whiskers so as to look handsome before the young ladies, and feminine teachers who spend half the Sabbath-school hour in adjusting their fine millinery, are not fit for the revived and earnest Sabbath-school of to-day." Marry! that's so. ———The *Baptist Teacher* commends "boosting" the superintendent. "Let him know," it says, "that you mean to stand by him; that you have faith in God and faith in the future; and the next time he rises to address the school the radiance of his face and the cheery ring of his voice will make everybody wonder what on earth has happened to so transfigure the man." ———*The Standard* affirms that "those teachers who know the homes of their classes and who open their own homes to the classes, both singly and collectively, in the way of pleasant entertainments and reunions, are the ones who are 'lucky' in keeping their pupils and leading them in the way of life."——— This is the way a plain man found fault with his minister: "My trouble with him is that he don t make no *pints;* and when he's done and through, and sot down, I can't tell what, in particular, he's been a talking about; only he's kep' a good kind of a noise a going for about five-and-forty minutes." Our readers can see the "pint" of this in its application to teachers, without our being obliged to bury it in their epidermis.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK.

THE history of that now famous hymn, "Ninety and Nine," as given by Rev. Theo. Cuyler, is an interesting one. It was written by Miss E. C. Clephane, and originally appeared in the "poet's corner" of some American paper. It was copied until it found its way into *The Rock*, an evangelical newspaper, where Mr. Sankey found it when he was in the Scottish Highlands, looking for some hymn peculiarly suited to the pastoral occupation of the most of his auditors. He adapted it to a wild, plaintive air that won its way not only to the hearts of the rustic shepherds, but of a vaster audience not contained within the boundaries of any one country.——— Dr. Vincent, we regret to hear, has been suffering exhaustion and depression consequent upon his excessive summer labors at Chautauqua and elsewhere. We hear that now he is very nearly himself once more, but it won't be his fault nor the fault of his friends, if he is not soon down again. The editor of the Sunday-school book and tract department of the Methodist denomination, and of two of its Sunday-school periodicals, its general Secretary, the manager of three conventions like that of Chautauqua,

the Normal Class lecturer for Brooklyn, superintendent of the Methodist Sabbath-school in Plainfield, general speaker and address maker in conventions and institutes anywhere within five hundred miles of New York, and, having the oversight of all the Methodist Sunday-school field,—all these seem to be enough data for a first-class obituary notice. If the American people like a man they love him to death.——— I. N. Baker, the former editor of the *Sunday School Times*, is now connected with the clothing house of Wanamaker & Brown. He suited people very well where he was before.———Dr. Atticus G. Haygood, who so long has held the position of Sunday-school Secretary of the M. E. Church South, has resigned that office, and is succeeded by the Rev. W. G. E. Cunnyngham, D. D.———The Bible was very quietly dropped out of the public schools of Chicago, the resolution being passed without the apology even of a discussion. It was one of those "matter-of-course" actions that do not set very well.———The New York Sunday-school Association is preparing for a vigorous winter's campaign. It is contemplated to have two weekly meetings for superintendents—one for "up" and the other for "down" town. Its programme of addresses and lectures, no doubt, will be as attractive as ever. ———The Normal Class, of Brooklyn, opens this year at the Hanson Place M. E. Church, with Dr. Vincent as its conductor for the first twelve lessons. Frank Beard assists Dr. Vincent with blackboard illustrations. The Brooklyn Sunday School Union also has a Saturday afternoon meeting for the exposition of the lesson for the following day.——— The Sunday-school Association of St. Louis have secured the service of Rev. S. J. Nicolls, D. D., for three months, to give an exposition of the lessons for the benefit of the teachers in that city.———J. V. Farwell has "a Sunday-school horse and buggy," which, for the last three years, he has used in his visits to the Sunday-schools of Lake County, in this state, where he resides. He and E. S. Wells keep Sunday-school interests in that county at white heat. The Baptists have secured a tract of seventy acres of land on Chautauqua Lake, right opposite the grounds of the Sunday School Assembly. They propose to use it as a summer resort for Baptist clergymen and for church and Sunday-school excursions and picnics. We should deprecate any possible rivalry between it and the Chautauqua Sunday School Assembly.———Indiana, with a promptness but little behind that of Ohio, has its programme for next year all arranged. Its questions and topics fall under the four divisions: "The Sunday-school; Helps; Workers; Work." ———There are seventeen Sunday-schools for the Chinese in San Francisco and Oakland.———J. W. Weir, president of the Bank of Harrisburg, has been superintendent of the First Presbyterian church, of Harrisburg, for forty years. Of course his Sabbath-school scholars, and teacher, and clerks, and friends could not let his seventieth birth-day go by without some testimony of their affection; so they called upon him, and congratulated him, and showered gifts down upon him in such a way that he must have realized what a store of love his work in the Sunday-school had laid up for him. He was a member of the first National Sunday School Convention, held in New York in 1832.——— Rev. J. B. Atchison, of Detroit, has been appointed Sunday-school agent of the M. E. Conference, to which he belongs, and assigned, also, to the editorship of the *Michigan Christian Advocate*. He retains the editorship of his children's paper, the *Sunday Guest*, and still prepares the blackboard outlines for the *Sunday School Times;* and is a good Sunday-school man generally.———Edward Danforth, the Secretary of the New York Association, was presented at Syracuse with a beautiful Swiss clock, as a testimony of appreciation for his faithful labors. He replied that he was expecting no reward here but was

looking for one above. But his fellow laborers wanted to show him that faithful men have rewards for *time* as well as for eternity.——— *The Earnest Worker*, of Richmond, Va., and the *Sower & Gospel Field*, of New York, are to be merged into a new weekly Sunday-school paper, which is to commence its existence on the first of January next. The *Earnest Worker* has already discontinued publication. The other will supply both subscription lists up to that date.——— The Rev. J. W. Harwood is responsible for the story that a Western Sabbath-school, formed by the offer of a tempting library, could find no one who knew how to conduct it, and so it was run all summer as a spelling school!

THE TEACHERS' MEETING.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—In the school of Rev. L. S. Hand, of Polk City, Iowa, they must have a library that is pretty much according to our notion. It seems to be both a church and a Sunday-school library, and the books are given out during the week at any church meeting, instead of during the lessons of the Sunday-school. A certain percentage of good marks is made a pre-requisite of drawing books by the scholars. Whether this condition is wise or not, we feel sure that the general plan is. Books are slowly but constantly added to the library, and, as a consequence, they are well worth having. Those who really want them come for and get them, and the Sunday-school is not bothered with the distribution of books at inconvenient and unsuitable times. As we once said, as a contributor to this journal, in regard to the disturbance it makes, so now we say: "We had as lief have a mule out in the entry as a library in a Sunday-school."

—Few of the Sabbath-school singing books contain more than two or three hymns and tunes specially adapted to infant classes. Teachers of such classes often find it difficult to procure those that are suitable for their use. Those who have been vexed in this way should follow the example set by Mrs. S. W. Clark, of Newark, N. J., a noted primary-class instructor. She keeps a couple scrap-books, one for her own use and one for her assistant, and into these she pastes all the hymns and tunes adapted to her purpose. Of every new Sabbath-school song book she buys two copies, and in this way she has managed to get quite a collection of songs for little ones. Until some publisher takes the hint, this is a good way of remedying the difficulty.

—C. B. Stout recommends that beauty as well as utility should be one of the qualities of the blackboard. He is disposed to think that a blackboard should not be black at all. Boards colored a sea-green, he says, are very agreeable to the eye and afford a fine ground for chalk and crayon. On boards of a delicate sky-blue the chalk shines with almost dazzling whiteness. Flame-colored crimson takes the chalk well and affords fine contrasts. Thus far we are not at issue with his suggestions, and, indeed, are thankful for his hints, but when he adds that soon we will see boards of "blue and gold—blue surface, bordered by gilt molding, sea-green and oak,"—isn't that going a little too far? Won't it make an exhibition toy of the blackboard, instead of a useful, effective servant in the presentation of truth?

—Many of the teachers in the city Sunday-schools take a vacation. Frank A. Ferris, of the 14th Street Presbyterian

Church New York, aims to make the re-assembling of his teachers a specially cordial and pleasant occasion. He sends each one a beautifully printed card notifying them of the "opening" teachers' meeting and asking them, if not able to be present, to write him a note saying when they will be in their place. "It will be a great satisfaction," he says on the card, "at the Re-Union, to hear from each absentee." He also sends each teacher a circular, reminding them that the next Sunday is their re-union Sabbath, and urging each one to be present a little before the hour, in time for mutual greetings. Fellow teachers should have a feeling toward each other as warm as that entertained by comrades who have fought together throughout a whole campaign. Those teachers work the best where this fraternal affection is most cultivated.

LITERATURE.

The final numbers of *Potter's Complete Bible Encyclopedia* have been issued. We have already called attention to its profuse illustrations, its typographical excellence, and the variety, extent, and accuracy of its information. The only place that we know of in which the latter quality is at all marred is on pages 892 and 893, where two illustrations of the Mosque of Omar (Dome of the Rock) are credited to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. How so patent a mistake came to be made we can scarcely imagine. In so good a work as this, one does not like to find any blunder. The concluding portion of the work, which is thrown into the form of an Appendix, is of great value. There are thorough, scholarly essays on "The Christian Dispensation as Typified in the Old Testament," "Historical and Physical Geography of the Holy Land," "The Correct Principles of Biblical Interpretation and Criticism," "Mohammedanism; Its Original Development," "History of the Early Christian Church," and other themes, which, with the numerous and exceedingly useful tables, make in themselves a pretty good historical and theological library. No minister or Sabbath-school teacher, who can possibly spare the funds, can afford to be without this illuminated aid to the understanding of sacred subjects. Philadelphia: John E. Potter & Co.

It is a pity to have written at the beginning of one's career, as Mrs. Stowe did, a book that took the world by storm. Hardly any one now takes up any new book of hers without depreciatingly shaking the head and inwardly saying: "Ah, you will never again write such a book as *Uncle Tom's Cabin!*" The shadow of the great reputation of that book falls upon the page of every new volume she writes, and makes it dim. Many of her later books would have made greater sensations than they have had not that first one made such a great one to begin with. The last one she has written, *We and Our Neighbors*, would certainly have made the fame of any new writer, but is not likely to increase hers any—though it ought to. It contains "the records of an unfashionable street," whither a young couple went to live in a cosy, sensible way, within their means, instead of attempting to keep "a place in society" by living in deluding show on some princely avenue. These young people every week had an "evening" for their friends, so social and so unrestrained as to become quite attractive to several people. Prominent among these were the dear old ladies, Miss Dorcas and Mrs. Betsey Ann Benthusen, just across the way, a certain good-naturedly splenetic doctor, a young Episcopal minister too spiritual for his own good, and some piquant, charming young sisters of the bride. There is something very healthful and homelike in the story, and two more couples fall wholesomely into love and marriage, and take also to such contented, unfashionable ways of living. New York: J. B. Ford & Co. Chicago: Hadley Bros. $1.75.

Some of the best sayings of Talmage have been collected by Rev. J. V. D. Shurts and issued in book form under the title of *Daily Thoughts*. There is no special appropriateness in the title beyond the fact that there are as many selections as there are days in the year, only the first being peculiarly fitting to the day to which it is linked. Talmage needs the services of such an editor as Mr. Shurts. He says a great many things well worth preserving, and a great many things that offend good taste. For the sake of that large number who relish, and are profited by, his best sayings, but whose enjoyment of them is often spoiled by close association with those not quite so felicitous, we are glad that these selections have been made. They contain some of the most incisive, brilliant, earnest, and effective words of this remarkable preacher. New York: Dodd & Mead. Chicago: W. G. Holmes. $2.00.

Pilgrim Melodies is a collection of tunes by J. E. Sweetser, adapted more particularly to hymns in "*Songs of the Sanctuary.*" New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

What our Friends Think and Say.

—Office of—

THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER,

Chicago, November, 1875.

It is a great gratification to us to be able to print letters so warmly commendatory as the following. As will be seen, many of them are from men well known and honored, and they show the high standing that The Teacher has taken and holds. Our friends may rest assured that no pains will be spared, either on the part of the publishers or the editor, to increase the excellence of a magazine which is already so satisfactory. The plans for the coming year contemplate improvements to be introduced, like those of this year, at intervals throughout the year—whenever it is possible to make them. Some are already decided upon, others will be adopted as soon as it is apparent that they are really useful. We mean that our friends shall have in The Teacher a sense of constant growth. If, now, all who are interested in it will do what they conveniently can to increase its circulation, we shall be able to add some things now out of our power. **Adams, Blackmer, & Lyon Pub. Co.**

In all its departments The Teacher is one of the very best Sunday-school publications in the world. Its lessons, especially, are worthy of the highest commendation.

(Gen.) Clinton B. Fisk,
New York.

The Teacher has been steadily improving, and our school have been delighted with it. At our teachers' meetings that stands far ahead of all other Sunday-school publications.

(Rev.) Lewellyn Pratt,
North Adams, Mass.

Your journal is more a *teacher* than any other with which I am acquainted. Its lessons are full, judicious, and practical; and the articles on related topics first-class, as the names of the writers guaranty. Nor do I ever "skip the fine print." I read it all with interest. The miscellaneous and current items are always capital. I have nothing but commendation.

(Prof.) E. Olney.
Mich. University, Ann Arbor.

The variety and thoroughness of discussion which mark the contributions to The National Sunday School Teacher are very noteworthy. Those engaged in the work of Sunday-school instruction are greatly in your debt for papers so rich in matter and attractive in form. The editorial management has been beyond all praise. Such aptness, skill, and fertility of resources I do not recall in any such magazine. In the treatment of the lessons, looking to the object in view, viz., the drawing forth naturally and legitimately from the inspired text of as full and rich instruction on divine things as possible—without fanciful and unwarranted interpretation—and this in form most readily available for the class instructor, and suggestive of independent and profitable thought, application, and enforcement, I can hardly see what more could be added. No aspect of the truth inculcated in the text seems to be overlooked.

(Pres.) Geo. F. Magoun,
Iowa College, Grinnell.

I have never had nor expressed but one opinion of The Teacher. In every respect it is worthy of the exalted position it has obtained among Sunday-school periodicals and in the hearts of Sunday-school workers. I recommend it wherever I go. The lessons, by Mr. Hazard,

are not excelled by any that come to my office, and I have six or eight other papers with which to compare them.

Altogether I do not see how you could make many improvements in THE TEACHER.

F. M. GREEN.
Akron, O.

I believe it to be the general opinion that THE TEACHER was never more practical, helpful, and satisfactory than at present. I have never yet had the pleasure of meeting your editor, but I desire to congratulate him upon his conspicuous success in making all the departments of THE TEACHER so pithy, so lively, and so profitable.

C. B. STOUT.
New Brunswick, N. J.

Were I limited to the perusal of but one exposition of the lessons, of all that I am acquainted with I should unhesitatingly select THE TEACHER.

LOGAN H. ROOTS,
Little Rock, Ark.

I have examined with some care the adult lessons in THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER for the last three numbers. They seem to me to be admirably adapted to their purpose, and to constitute an invaluable aid to Sunday-school workers.

(Rev.) LYMAN ABBOTT,
New York.

THE TEACHER was never more valuable in its lesson helps than under its present editorship.

(Bishop) CHAS. EWD. CHENEY,
Chicago, Ill.

THE TEACHER as a whole is a gain in every department upon an ordinary Sunday-school workers' ideal. It combines spice and substance, learning and fervor, thoroughness and sprightliness; so as to be worthy of all confidence and fascinating to all readers. How you are to better it much without lifting it out of its design I do not understand.

(Rev.) W. A. BARTLETT.
Chicago, Ill.

It would be difficult for me to express the admiration that I have felt for THE TEACHER of 1875 without seeming to be extravagant. Its contributed articles, its lesson notes and questions, its practical applications and Scripture references, its skillful reviews, its simple blackboards, and its fresh, newsy paragraphs, are all up to a high standard of excellence, and it is hard to see how it can be excelled in any department.

JOHN B. SMITH, Hartford, Ct.

Of all the "helps" to the study of the International Lessons there are none that I prize more highly than those prepared by Mr. Hazard, for THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. I never take them up without finding something good which I could not find elsewhere. Besides, he makes the Bible speak, and unfolds the truths in the light of the sacred text itself, always, as it seems to me, hiding his own theories and speculations behind the simple Word of God.

R. H. GRIFFITH,
Rushville, Ill.

The contributions are most interesting and of great value to Sunday-school teachers, and all Bible students. Gotten up with such care and ability they must win a choice place in the hearts of all. The lessons, so classified, and comments so arranged as to bring the best thoughts of all earnest, anxious teachers to the fore-front of the great truths to be presented to the minds of the scholars. The editorial management — *how can it be better!*

J. E. LEWIS,
Supt. Ref. Church S. S.,
South Bend, Ind.

I consider THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER as ably conducted in all respects — a leader in the good work of Bible instruction.

(Pres.) P. A. CHADBOURNE,
Williams College.

The contributions are well — some, able. The editorial seems to me *very* well managed, but the great excellence

is in the lesson department. I have every week some fourteen expositions of the lesson, but none which meets the want of the teacher like Mr. Hazard's. Many are greatly *geographical*—others are merely *narrative*—some *speculative*, but THE TEACHER has evidently aimed at the exact *thought* in the mind of the writer and to follow it like a line of light. And it becomes luminous along this track. The power lies, not in the *exposition*, but in the *truth* exposed. As a whole, I heartily approve THE TEACHER, and could better do without all the rest than it.

O. J. HARMON,
Oswego, N. Y.

DEAR SIR—I regard THE TEACHER for the year 1875 superior to anything of the kind published. I was a subscriber to its second year, and have given, since that time, a careful investigation to several similar publications, and have yet to find a periodical equal to it.

J. Q. A. PERRIN,
Lafayette Ind.

We don't well see how you could improve THE TEACHER. We thought so last year, yet it has been improved wonderfully, and become an indispensable "help." Practical thoughts and suggestions are what are needed in preparing lessons (something the teacher can *build* upon). We like our other helps much, but THE TEACHER better. Articles upon the subject of the lessons are a good feature—*more* of *that* and *less* theorizing on the "how" to run a Sunday-school, by the Rev. Prof. Somebody, who never tried his hands at it. Superintendents and teachers will work out the "how," only give them food for thought and stimulate them to action.

ROLAND T. OAKES,
Supt. 3d Cong. S. S., Chicopee, Mass.

I consider THE TEACHER the best periodical of the kind ever published. The contributions and editorials have a freshness and vigor that render them ever readable, instructive and interesting. The notes, comments, and explanations in THE TEACHER leave nothing to be desired. They are full and complete. THE TEACHER, as a whole, is indeed and in truth a *teacher*. As such it meets my hearty approval, and I shall use all my influence to extend its circulation and usefulness in the state.

W. G. WHIDBY,
Pres't State S. S. Conv., Atlanta, Ga.

I regard THE TEACHER as far superior to all other "helps" on the lesson. The leading articles contributed by our greatest theologians make it a *choice little book of gems*, from which both teacher and pupil may cull the richest, brightest and most noble thoughts contained in the lesson. The "Notes and Comments" are brilliant, powerful and lucid, worthy of the editor. Its every department is marked with care and sterling thought.

WM. M. RULE,
Central City, Col.

The three departments are good—good—good; THE TEACHER as a whole, very good. I see publications which seem to me poor helps compared with yours.

C. O. FARRINGTON,
Brewer, Me.

In my long Sunday-school connection I have had occasion to examine a variety of question books and papers, commentaries, etc., etc., and it gives me sincere pleasure to testify to the superiority of your SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER and Lesson Papers to all other kindred works that I have seen. THE TEACHER is a lucid and comprehensive commentary on the lessons, and its reading matter, free from sensationalism and sectarianism, is interesting, instructive, and spiritually healthful. The questions are *sensible*, suggestive, and for the most part, well arranged, and it would be simply a deprivation to me to exchange them for any help of the kind that I am acquainted with.

C. F. A. JOHNSON,
Supt. Cong. S. S.,
Presque Isle, Me.

THE

NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

VOL. X.—DECEMBER, 1875.—No. XII.

DOUBTING THOMAS.

BY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT.

THERE seems to me to be two important practical lessons to be deduced from the experience of Thomas. Writing this article for the number of THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER which contains the lesson on John 20: 24–31, I do not need to recall the incident. The reader may easily remind himself of its details by turning over a few pages to the place where the editor has discussed it, and where, doubtless, he has explained the character of Thomas, as interpreted by the only other mentions made of him in the New Testament.

The first lesson to which I wish to advert is the contrast between two kinds of doubt — that which desires the truth, and that which determinedly rejects it.

The doubt of doubting Thomas was of the first description. He loved and honored Jesus Christ. He had followed him faithfully while the Master lived. He had buried hope with him when he died. To him unseen things were unreal. He could follow Christ into Judea, willing to die with him (John 11: 16), but that there could be any other result than death, or any sweet fruits and flowers to grow out of the grave to bless future generations of mankind he could not conceive. A present king and a present kingdom his mind could grasp, but he neither comprehended the many mansions of an unseen kingdom, nor the way by which he could enter unto them. John 14: 5. He had large affections, but little imagination, and, therefore, small hope. So when the story of his Lord's resurrection was repeated to him the news was "too good to be true." He desired to believe in Christ's Lordship; all his heart went out toward his Master; but he had seen him arrested, carried off like a common felon, spit upon, beaten, scourged, mocked, crucified. How could he be a Messiah? How could one who succumbed to Caiaphas and Pilate conquer death? He doubted. He denied. He demanded an investigation; and he demanded the only kind of proof which his prosaic soul was capable of appreciating. It might be a fraud. It might be an apparition. He must, therefore, feel with his own hands the nail-wounds and the spear-thrust. Not even seeing was believing!

But in all this he really wished to know the truth. He was not content to remain in darkness and doubt. He proposed to investigate only to reach a conclusion; and when Christ took him at his word, appeared to him, showed him

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the nail-wounds and the spear-thrust, invited him to feel them, he at once yielded a glad assent to the truth. He did not lay a finger on the sacred body. He bowed with the cry of adoration, "My Lord and my God."

Contrast with his spirit that of the Pharisees. They also were skeptics. They also demanded a sign from heaven. They asseverated that if Christ would descend from the cross they would believe in him. Their demand was similar, but their spirit was not. They did not wish to believe. They did not propose to investigate. Or if they conducted an investigation, as in the case of the cure of the blind man (John 9), it was not to ascertain the truth—it was to prove Christ an imposter. And defeated in that attempt, they did what they could to break the blind man's testimony by excommunicating him.

Now both kinds of skepticism exist at the present day. They are often confounded—but very unjustly. All skepticism is not wicked. We arrive at the truth only by doubting, by questioning, by demanding an investigation. Christianity does not hide from searching investigation. It does not fear questioning; but it will only submit its claims to an honest and unprejudiced questioner. When Renan proposes to test the truth of the resurrection by providing a corpse and calling on the church to raise it from the dead before a scientific commission, does any one suppose that he is really in doubt—that he seriously proposes an investigation—that he would be convinced by any result? When the proposer of the prayer-test suggests to the Christian world to set apart a ward in a hospital and try the effect of prayer on the patients, does any one imagine that he is in doubt, and wishes, honestly wishes, for light? This is not the spirit of Thomas; it is the spirit of Pharisaism. It is the spirit, not of doubt, but of determined unbelief. It is always in vain to answer questions which are asked, not for light, but for argument.

But there is also many a Thomas in the church, and many a Thomas in the Sabbath-school. He is really perplexed. He wants light. He can not get it. His spiritual sight is dim; his spiritual intuitions are dull. He doubts; he can not help doubting; he is not to be condemned for doubting; he is not to be ranked with infidels; he is not to be treated to a monstrous perversion of Scripture with the admonition, "He that doubteth is damned." The Christian is to imitate Christ; he is to discriminate between Thomas and the Pharisee. The latter he may reply to with silence; the former is entitled to infinite patience, gentleness, and love.

The second lesson is also best illustrated by a contrast:

The characteristic of Thomas' demand was not that he wanted evidence for his faith, but that he must have *tangible* evidence. He could only believe in the resurrection of his Lord on the direct evidence of his senses. He had been with Christ three years; had felt the wonderful inspiration of his presence; had seen him heal the sick, cure the deaf, and blind, and impotent, and raise the dead; had heard him, with indescribably pathetic eloquence, prophesy his own death and his followers' dispersion; had heard him, with glowing words, which enkindle our imaginations even now, after eighteen centuries of delay, foretell his resurrection and his second and glorious coming. And yet, when the first prophecy was fulfilled, and death had taken the Master, the disciple could not believe that the second prophecy was also fulfilled, and that he had risen from the dead. The crucifixion, which he had *seen*, effaced all the spiritual hopes and all the sweet confidence with which the presence and the words of Christ had inspired him.

Contrast with this unfaith of Thomas the faith of the dying thief. There is no evidence that he had ever seen Christ until he saw him on the cross. He knew him only as a king crowned in mockery, a prophet whose lips death

was fast sealing, a Messiah crucified by Jew and Gentile, a leader deserted by his followers. There was absolutely nothing visible, nothing tangible, to justify the appeal, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." But the unseen glory of Christ's royalty shown in that hour of darkness and desolation; and the dying thief, his spiritual sight quickened, perhaps, (so it sometimes is,) as he neared the border, saw the glory, where other eyes saw only shame.

Honest skepticism, which demands the evidences of Christianity before it can believe, is not to be refused its request, nor scorned as infidel, nor rebuked as though it were an enemy to Christ because it wants proof of his resurrection power. But that is the highest faith which sees in Christ's own character the evidences of his divinity, and accepts him on no other proof than that which his own lips and life afford.

SIMON, THE ROCK.

BY REV. J. C. TAYLOR.

THE frequent mention of Simon Peter by name and in connection with such a variety of incidents affords us a considerable insight by which to study his character, both as a man and as an apostle. In this warm-hearted, many-sided Israelite we shall find the signal qualities of the valiant leader and apt spokesman, which various emergencies proved him to be, or contributed to make him.

The region of Galilee from which Christ chose his twelve disciples teemed with a dense population, and the deep valley in which lay the sparkling Lake of Gennesaret, its shores beaded with cities and villages, rung like a bell with the din of labor and traffic. Making due allowance for strangers and proselytes, this large population consisted mainly of Jews, who cherished the faith of their fathers and kept the feasts at Jerusalem. In speech and manner they were not without rustic peculiarities; but in matters of religion, patriotism, industry, heroism, and all the nobler traits, they stand confessedly the foremost of their own nation, and surpassed by few of any land.

Simon Peter was a representative Galilean Jew, with the warmer and more emotional characteristics emphasized and heightened. To active men such as Simon and Andrew, James and John, the fisheries of the lake, which afforded them their occupation, were not only a means of livelihood, but tolerably lucrative. They formed co-partnerships, had men in their employment, and discover many marks of enterprise. In the case of the sons of Zebedee, that energy which gave fitness to the surname Boanerges, *Sons of Thunder*, (a quality which he desired to commend and perpetuate in all his "fishers of men,") was evidently manifest in their conduct of every day affairs. We may consider it as a natural consequence of this diligence in business that we read of Peter's having a home of his own in which to receive his friends, and shelter the sick (Matt. 8: 14), and of the honor conferred upon John in being permitted to share with his Master's mother the like blessing. John 19: 27.

Along with this business thrift we trace in these men also the commendable interest of true Hebrews in the religious developments of the day, as well as in the faith of the fathers. They are off to attend upon the ministrations of John the Baptist, as became most earnest inquiries after truth and righteousness, and by prayerful searching of Scripture and interchange of views are prepared to recognize as soon as pointed

out, "Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets did write." The whole make-up of these men, as well as the original text of Acts 4: 13, plainly evinces that our translators do not convey the legitimate impression when they allow Peter and John to be styled "unlearned and ignorant men." It was not the object of the sacred penman to compliment them upon their ignorance, but to speak of them as untaught in the learning of Jewish schools; being but unlettered laymen in the estimation of those pedants, who, when in danger of being convinced against their will, resorted to threatening and violence. Their self-possession and intelligence were nevertheless a marvel to the persecuting rulers, who saw in them men so much superior to their rank and scholarship. Nor did they fail to detect the source of this moral and intellectual elevation, for which Simon was, if possible, more indebted to his Lord than his brethren.

Besides the various characteristics and experiences which Peter had in common with his brother fishermen and disciples, he had very marked distinguishing traits. No one of the disciples stumbled more frequently and sorely, or showed heartier repentance and consecration. A keen sensitiveness to the scorn and opposition of tradition-mongering Pharisees, and a quick appreciation of the Christly character of Jesus, struggled one with the other in his susceptible nature more fiercely than in any of the twelve. This helps to explain the true significance of the surnames, Cephas and Petros, which Christ conferred upon Simon, and which, rightly viewed, gives us the key to character and the work of grace in his heart. When first brought to Jesus by his brother Andrew he received a greeting as remarkable as prophetic. "And when Jesus beheld him he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation a stone." This salutation was doubtless as much a matter of astonishment to himself as to others. Emotional, generous, and impulsive, others were ready according to the caprice of the hour to flatter, or to distrust and denounce him. Conscious of his own faults in a good degree, he was but too ready to distrust himself. "A word in due season, how good"—especially a seasonable word of encouragement to wavering and laboring souls. With divine foreknowledge and purpose regarding Simon's undeveloped future, he who was about to call and ordain him a pillar in his spiritual temple, was fitly the first one to speak the encouraging word for which that disciple had waited long. Inasmuch as this token of consolation was to be henceforth incorporated in his very name, the question arises as to the suitableness or significance of his former name.

"Simon," which is equivalent to *hearer*, was neither inexpressive nor inappropriate to one who used his ears so well. But the fact is not allowed to escape us that he was the son of one called Jona, a fallible man, indicating, perhaps, as Alford says, "his fleshly state and extraction, and forming the greater contrast to his spiritual name, state, and blessing to follow." At least there can be no doubt as to the impetuosity and corresponding instability of the natural Simon, whatever may be the exact force of his patronymic Bar-jona. But such infirmaties were not to prevail always. "Thou shalt be called Cephas," a *stone—rock;* symbolical of undaunted firmness and courage. How such words at their very first meeting must have warmed and thrilled his laboring mind.

At a subsequent time, near the close of Christ's ministry, this new name was reiterated with greater emphasis. Simon Peter, with the rest, had been now for some time under the instruction of Jesus. Christ was about to probe and test them. He wanted to see and to show them the difference between themselves and the world. He was about to bring them to a fuller consciousness of their own convictions. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" was

his first question. "And they said, some John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Most skillful was he in the art of questioning. This inquiry was carefully followed by one more directly pointed at themselves. Forasmuch as the answer was to be drawn from the germs of their own brief experience, thus far but imperfectly understood, it was by far the more difficult to answer. The popular opinion it was easy to echo. "But whom say ye that I am?" gained not so ready a response. This required them to cut loose from popular opinion and stand by their own convictions. Backwardness among his friends was not one of Peter's faults. The others hesitate, but not he. "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," was his language. "And Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church." Thou hast announced my true character as the incarnate Son of God; I will announce your future: "Thou art Petros," of the nature of rock, "and upon this rock will I build my church." Peter, with all his faults, was honestly and entirely consecrated to his Master's service as he conceived it. Upon this fact Christ seizes, and of it makes good use for his present encouragement, though it is no bar to necessary rebuke whenever that is needed. Keeping this idea in view the language becomes at once clear, intelligible, consistent. Out of consecrated human nature Christ builds his church, impregnable against every assault, and triumphant over all her enemies. Peter's confession revealed in him a degree of consecration a little in advance of the rest. He was not the most lovely or lovable of the disciples. His imperfections were perhaps more prominent than those of any other. Naturally rash, headlong, and variable, he was decidedly unstable. But the grace of God upon that consecrated heart within was rapidly changing all that. Much had he to learn, but he was making real progress. He would at length be able to set his face as a flint. That he had which was never derived from, never confers with, flesh and blood. "With such consecrated hearts my work shall not languish—my church shall be built. I will begin with thee, who art the first and so prompt to confess me, though unacknowledged by the world. As I begin so will I finish. It shall bear this same designation throughout. Its walls and towers, and pillars shall all be worthy of the foundation, being built on this identical principle—shall all be rock."

The Saviour in thus addressing Peter, and the other disciples and the church through him, uses very strong language. Peter-like we are almost ready to rebuke him: "This be far from thee, Lord! Didst thou not know, Lord, that the man of sin would take advantage of such expressions, exalting himself beyond measure?" But the Lord said not to Peter, "thou art a pope"—only this: "thou art rock." "And upon this principle, not of popery, nor primacy, but of consecrating, regenerating, sanctifying grace, which is making thee over and hardening thee down into true manhood, 'I will build my church.' Many as unstable as thou wast shall, as I build, like thee become established."

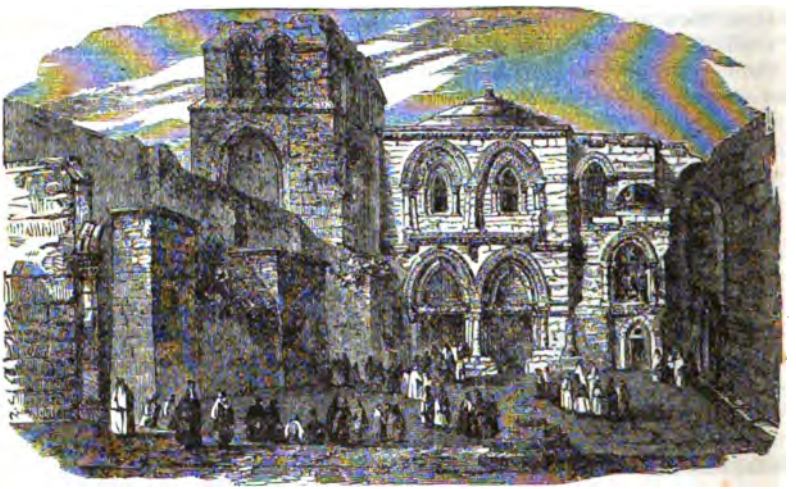
True, snares, and pit-falls, and bitter humiliation yet awaited Peter. Satan was to sift him as wheat, purging the chaff away. But Christ prayed for him that his faith fail not. He prophesied over him that he should be yet more as rock at length, strengthening his brethren. And now, finally, he receives his last charge from the risen Saviour, who re-appears and addresses his disciples from that side the grave nearest heaven. If the first meeting of Christ with Peter is memorable for its encouraging and prophetic greeting, the last interview, still full of tenderness, discloses the progress of the intervening months. The thrice-repeated "lovest thou me?"

indicates with how deep concern the Master confides his charge to the care of under shepherds, even when as earnest and effective as Simon Peter was getting to be. Then he points out to the faithful witness and martyr his way, which leads down the path of the cross-bearer to the gibbet at its end, standing just without the gate of the New Jerusalem, and surmounted by a crown of righteousness. Bearing the treasure committed to him in an earthen, fallible vessel still, but with a heart consecrated to Christ, Peter tarries with his brethren in Jerusalem till endued with power from on high, on the day of Pentecost, and thenceforward he stands forth in the full stature of an apostle.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER.

BY PROF. E. C. MITCHELL, BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, CHICAGO.

ONE of the most beautiful structures in Jerusalem, and one of the most celebrated in the world, is "The Church of the Holy Sepulcher." It now embraces under one roof the alleged sites of the crucifixion and burial of our Lord, as well as many minor incidents in connection with his death and resurrection. were erected by the crusaders in the twelfth century. The eastern, or right hand door has been walled up for many years. The tower on the left is the remnant of what was once a massive campanile of five stories in height. The lower story contains the chapel of St. John. On the right is a projecting



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER.

The building stands very near the center of the present city — in the Christian quarter — its lofty domes being conspicuous objects in the background of any picture of Jerusalem, as seen from the Mount of Olives. The accompanying picture represents the building as it now appears at its south, or principal entrance. The double doorway and tower porch with an ornamented window and little cupola, the basement of which has a chapel dedicated to St. Mary, of Egypt.

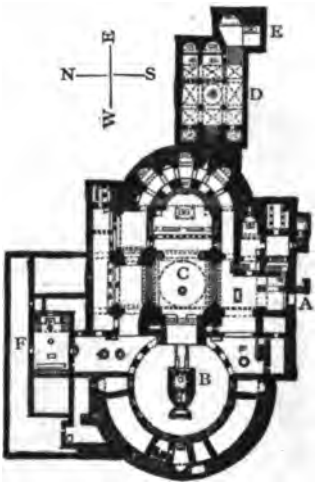
As we enter the building by this south door (marked A on the ground plan) the first object of interest before us is the "stone of unction," so called—an oblong marble slab in the pavement — which is said to cover the *real* stone on which

our Lord's body was anointed for burial. Turning to the left we come to a circular stone, which is said to mark the spot where Mary stood while the anointing was in progress. We then enter the rotunda (marked B on the plan), which is sixty-seven feet in diameter, consisting of the main floor and two ranges of galleries, supported by eighteen massive piers. In the center of this rotunda, beneath the lofty dome, stands the HOLY SEPULCHER, a small mausoleum about 26x18 feet, which has been the shrine of more pilgrims, and the occasion of more controversy, and focal center of more popular interest and religious enthusiasm than any object of its size upon the face of the earth.

Whatever may be the ultimate decision respecting the identity of the site, there is no question about the historical fact that for more than fifteen centuries the great body of the Greek and Roman church embracing a large part of Christendom, has believed in this spot as the veritable burial place of our Lord. Kings and princes have made pilgrimages of it, and nations have waded through bloody wars to secure its possession.

In the smaller picture we have the south side of the mausoleum with its doorway on the east illuminated by candles, and covered with the banner of the cross. As we enter the doorway we find ourselves in an ante-room, called the Chapel of the Angel; and in the center of the room is a stone eighteen inches square, said to be a fragment of the stone on which the angel sat. Passing into the inner chamber through a low aperture we stand within the sepulcher, a quadrangular vault about six feet by seven. On the right, or north, side of the vault is a shelf of rock about two feet above the floor, covered with a marble slab. This is supposed to be the place where the Lord lay. Above it are suspended forty-three lamps of gold and silver which burn continually.

Passing across the rotunda to the north side of the building we find two round marble stones let into the pavement, the first of which indicates the spot where Jesus stood when he appeared to Mary Magdalene, and the second the spot where Mary stood. A few steps further north we enter the "Chapel of the Apparition," (near the corridor marked F on the plan,) or traditional scene of the Lord's appearance to his mother after the resurrection. A circular spot on the east side of the room marks the place where Jesus stood. Still further east, in front of the high altar, is the spot where the true cross was identified by a miracle. The story is that when Helena, the mother of Constantine, was in Jerusalem searching for the Holy Sepulcher, she discovered, near it, three crosses, and the tablet bearing the inscription separated from them. Being unable to determine which was our Saviour's cross, Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, suggested an infallible test. A noble lady of Jerusalem lay sick of an incurable disease; the three crosses were presented to her in succession. The first two produced no effect; but at the approach of the third she opened her eyes, recovered her



GROUND PLAN.

A. Main entrance.
B. Rotunda and Mausoleum of the Sepulcher.
C. Greek Church.
D. Chapel of Helena.
E. Chapel of the Invention of the Cross.
F. Latin Church and Chapel of the Apparition.

strength, and sprang from the bed in perfect health! Just south of the altar in this "Chapel of the Apparition" is a kind of marble box in which is said to be enclosed a fragment of a porphyry column, called the Column of the Flagellation, being the column to which our Lord was bound when he was scourged.

Returning a few steps toward the rotunda we pass down a corridor parallel with the northern aisle of the Greek church to its eastern extremity, and find ourselves in a low, dark chamber, partly hewn in the rock, which, since the twelfth century has been regarded as the

HOLY SEPULCHER.

"prison of our Lord." Passing thence southward we come into the nave of the Greek church (marked C)—a gorgeously ornamented structure 40x98 feet. The high altar is near the eastern end, and the throne of the patriarch behind it. Over the western end is the central dome of the church, supported by four large piers fifty-two feet high. Beneath this dome is a small marble column a little above the floor, which is said to mark the center of the earth! It is believed that from this spot was taken the red clay which formed the body of Adam!

At the eastern end of the church a flight of steps, which widen as they descend, lead us down to the chapel of Helena, a gloomy but picturesque room about 40x50 feet, built on the site of an old cistern. Descending again a rock-hewn stair-case twelve steps further down we come to the solid floor of a rock-cut vault, called the chapel of the "Invention of the Cross." Here tradition affirms that the three crosses were dug up, together with the crown of thorns, the nails, etc.

Re-ascending and coming back by the south aisle to the main entrance of the church, we pass, on our way, the tomb of Godfrey, the first Latin king of Jerusalem, and of Baldwin, his brother and successor, and then of *Melchizedek*, the first king of Jerusalem, and finally of Adam, the progenitor of the race!

Having thus reached the climax of absurdities, we are prepared to ascend the stairway, near the stone of unction, to a room directly over these last mentioned apartments, called the "Chapel of the Elevation of the Cross." Here we are shown the place of crucifixion, and the holes in the pavement where the crosses were fixed. To be sure, there are rooms beneath this platform, but the tradition is that the ground below has been removed and conveyed to Rome, leaving the original surface of Golgotha to be supported on piers and arches.

We will stop here, but have left undescribed the "Chapel of the Mocking," the "Chapel of the Parting of the Garments," the "Chapel of the Penitent Thief," the "rocks which were rent," the "skull of Adam," etc., etc. The reader's imagination can fill up the outline. *Ex uno disce omnes.* We have thus taken a hasty survey of the principal objects of superstitious veneration within the walls of this remarkable building. Certainly nowhere in civilized lands were so many gross impositions upon human credulity ever collected under one roof. The first impulse of the intelligent Christian is to leave the whole building in utter disgust, including all its traditions under one condemnation.

A discrimination should doubtless be made, however, in favor of the Holy Sepulcher itself, the site of which is yet in dispute, and the claims of the present locality being not wholly disproved. Those claims rest, *first*, on the absence of any other claim in behalf of any special locality, and the *a priori* presumption that the early disciples would have remembered and cherished the spot; and, *secondly*, on the historical fact recorded by Eusebius that the Emperor Constantine "found" the sepulcher and erected over it in 326 A. D., a magnificent Basilica, which, though repeatedly destroyed, has been as often restored, and is perpetuated in the present building. On the other hand it is objected to these claims, *first*, that as a matter of fact the early disciples did *not* attach any importance to the localities here commemorated, as appears from the silence of the sacred writers and apostolic fathers respecting them; *secondly*, that history does not record that Constantine "found" this spot by *tradition*, but that it was miraculously revealed to him, and *finally* that the spot as now exhibited is so far within the city that it must have been within the "second wall," described by Josephus as existing at the date of the crucifixion, and hence contrary to the Scripture which places the tomb outside the city.

This last point is of course a vital one, and has awakened much discussion on both sides. The statements of Josephus respecting the course of the walls are somewhat ambiguous, and, in the present state of the modern city, difficult to verify. It has been hoped that the explorations now in progress would unearth some facts in regard to the ancient city which would throw light upon the subject, but as yet they have not done so. If these should ultimately fail it would seem as if the question must forever remain unsettled. Or, should the decision be adverse to the present site, as many of the best Bible geographers believe it will, we should then be without any definite knowledge of the place where the Lord lay. And why is not this a "consummation devoutly to be wished"? Who that has witnessed the fanaticism, superstition, and imposture which have here disgraced the name of Christianity, can fail to see the wisdom of that providential ordering of the affairs of the church which obliterated all trace of material objects, to the end that the mind might rest on the spiritual facts alone? As the body of Moses was hidden, to prevent idolatry, so the tomb of Christ may have been allowed to be forgotten, to avoid a worse profanation. The besom of destruction which swept over Jerusalem and scattered the early church may have been the divinely appointed iconoclast to provide against the sensuous tendencies of the human mind, and clear the way for a purer worship.

Perhaps some mention should be made of an absurd theory recently propounded by Mr. J. Fergusson, an English architect, to the effect that the sacred rock of the Mohammedans on Mt. Moriah is the real sepulcher of Jesus, and the "Dome of the Rock" (or Mosk of Omar, as it is incorrectly called) is the veritable Basilica erected over the sepulcher by Constantine! The theory is worthy of notice only from the fact that it somehow found its way into the English edition of Smith's Bible Dictionary, and, though corrected in the American edition, may yet mislead some students of that otherwise invaluable work.

If theories were in order it might be easy to suggest one. Many recent travelers have expressed the opinion that the natural place for the crucifixion would have been on the brow of Mt. Moriah, as it overhangs the valley of Jehosaphat. This was always "without the gate" (Heb. 13: 12), and yet "nigh to the city" (John 19: 20), being but a few steps from Pilate's judgment hall. It was literally "the place of a skull" (Matt. 27: 33), for it is, and always has been, spotted with graves and strewed with bones. It is in full view of the great thoroughfare between Jerusalem and

Jericho, as seems to be implied in Matt. 27: 39. Moreover it is on the Temple Mount, and thus *a priori*, the appropriate altar for the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Nor is it difficult here to find a site for the "new tomb" of Joseph. The mountain "over against you" is a "garden" of olives, and its sides are literally honeycombed with sepulchral caves. Any one of these might have been the temporary resting-place of Jesus, and having been so, might easily have been forgotten in the joy of his resurrection and in the grander revelations and more glorious triumphs of the Pentecost.

THE TRAINING OF YOUNG DISCIPLES.

BY LYMAN WHITING, D. D.

A CHRISTIAN lady, a favorite writer for children, led me into her garden to see her flowers. A row of pale, puny plants, brought from the sunny windows of her front room halted us. "Ah," said she, "these poor flowers show how we treat the children in our churches. The seeds sown in window-boxes,—the sweet germs petted with nicest tending until grown enough to set out doors—then as if 'out of sight out of mind.' It is a common fate to little ones longing to be 'brought unto Jesus,' and to young church members. Nobody seems much to care for, or mind them after they are in the church, or are old enough to be there." I saw the flowers, and I saw behind them the young disciples within and without our churches, in afflictive numbers, looking, typically, just like them. What can be done about it? Can this strange cruelty of the mother-churches toward the little ones "born in the house" be repented of? Can the causes for it be shown? Can the mother-heart be touched to see and feel these unnatural and fatal exposures of scores of little ones, by birth and possession her own?

"Since I joined the church none of the members ever ask me how I get on, or anything about my religious life. I should not know I was in the church, only from a rap I get now and then from the old brethren about being a consistent Christian." Who has not heard this language from young members? I quote it literally. Nor is it peculiar to any one form of church life. Where confirmation takes the place of our conversion, and public confession of Christ, it is seen as elsewhere. Once get them into the church, and spiritual nurture ceases. It is confessed, as seen everywhere, that the training of young disciples is a work ruinously lacking in our churches. The Sunday-school does not profess distinctively to do it. As a schoolmaster it labors to bring *all* souls to Christ, rather than to build up into perfect men in Christ. The modern pastorate is so much a pulpit-*ate*, preaching, rather than the care (*cure* is obs.) of souls, that any systematic culture of children in the church is neither enjoined in theological schools, required by councils and presbyteries, nor expected by the churches.

Spiritual culture of the young is not an organic part of our church-life. The want of it is a wasteful, impoverishing defect; for, (*a.*,) the ratio of child-life in a church is commonly two or three to one of the adult-life in it. (*b.*) All that child-life can be converted—Christ-born. In the latter days it will be, "*all* thy children shall be taught of the Lord." (*c.*) The quicker moral sensibilities and teachableness of childhood make it about certain that children, under special religious culture, will early come to Christ; and if the culture is kept up, will grow into excellent Christian manhood. Now, is not any church system, or accepted

ministration in a church, which practically sets all these facts aside, living in a wasteful and ruinous manner? Who doubts it? The call in this journal for former articles and for this article on the subject shows editorial conviction. The vast Sunday-school toil in thought and furnishment—the modern turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children—confesses the unspoken feeling: "The church is wrong in the treatment of her children." That conviction will grow. It ought to. This journal, or any other, moving the churches to see this, will be an apostle to the circumcision in the best sense. And painful is the fact that the foremost want in this work of training young disciples, is the conviction in the church that they need any special culture or training at all. *That* is the obstacle greater than all others. There is no popular conviction of the need of pastoral and special culture for the children and youth. No *time* is set apart in Christian thought for it, and no prevalent home-conviction exists which would carefully send children if such meetings were provided. The secular school so fills the week that all recess from it is needed for play. Time nor place can be found for the work, because there is no general conviction of the vital value of it. The catechism was a school-book in earlier days, and in New England the pastors met all the children of the towns, at stated times for reviews of it. That did much; but it failed, because Jesus, as a child's Saviour, and religion, as a personal experience for children, were not the ground-work of the plan. But a public conviction and care for pious child-culture was shown by it, which it is our first labor to recover. The "catechumens" (literally the instructed) of the primitive churches showed apostolic care and wisdom toward the enquiring and converted youth. But we, before saying a word as to the best way to train the young in our churches and congregations, must find how to get them together so they may be trained. The time when, the place where, and, at the foundation of all, a conviction in the church that it is *an essential thing to be done!* Oh for the day when Jesus shall be understood by his "disciples" in "Suffer the children to come unto me." Evangelists in blessed revivals, and Sunday-school conventions herald the day. It *will* come, when parents, pastors, and teachers make it an organic part of church-life and work to train children in personal, visible Christian character. In that day our public schools will give place each week to gatherings of the children with pastors and special helpers for instruction and special culture in early piety, and the church shall return to her original mode of growth; from "thy children within thee," the church in the house, the foundation of the church in the world. But in what do children so need this care and culture to form in them religious character?

1. *Begin with the bodies holding their souls.* A pastor fit for his office knows that each young soul dwells in a fleshly tabernacle, beset with perils from passion, from frailty, and from ignorance. In the flesh lurk forces and appetites which let alone, left to themselves, make sure shipwreck of body and of soul. These dangerous forces in each young human being need looking after. "Parents can do it," one says. Yes, parents can, and many of them do it; but generally they do not. "*My* child in danger from any such thing as strong drink, vile company, books, pictures, and secret sensualities!" The suggestion is offence—or insult. Try the suggestion on the first ten parents you meet; then try, if you can, the unseen practices, reading conversation, picture-making, etc., etc., of the children of these same parents, and see if no need is found of "warning, reproof, and rebuke" such as few parents can either find the true occasion, or have the ability to give. There is a fringe here on the web of human life most distressing to a lover of children to lift. Every thread in it *may* hold an infection that can kindle deadly disease a little

further on. The awful armies of young drunkards, the legions of corrupted youth are appalling testimonies to this necessity. A pastor and Christian teacher, with timely care and culture, can do what no other helpers can do for the physical protection of the soul from the body. In youth, or never, this training must be done.

2. *Mentally.*—What a field for culture offers! Conscience for the school-room, religion mixed with spelling, reading, and all first lessons. God in geography, in grammar, arithmetic, and history. Who shall show these foundation truths but the teacher of religion, the pastor, or his helper? Then, a little later, the mental aims; study and life for Christ; books to be read; models to be chosen; lines of thought and enquiry to be pursued. Who shall guide and train to this Christian, intellectual life? Not the secular teacher. He is not employed for that. It is not his calling, either. Does it not need to be done, and can any one do it with the loving authority, the persuasive skill, a good pastor, or some scribe well instructed can bring to it? Pages would fill with this part of the subject.

3. *Spiritually.*—We may as well lay down the pen now. Spaces and magnitudes open from this part, encompassed with glories and grandeurs, with woes and with shames, about which no words of ours are good for much. A Christian child with the blessed human career possible, and the multiples eternity will make of a life from end to end Christ-born and grown. Ah, that is something to sit down and think upon, rather than to write about! It is too rich in delight, too surpassing in all computations "of glory and honor, immortality, eternal life," to be compassed by our poor human words. Are not such souls worth care and culture?

International Series of Sunday School Lessons.

LESSON XLIX.—DEC. 5, 1875.—JESUS AND MARY.

SCRIPTURE.—John 20 : 11-18. Commit 15-18; Primary Verse, 17.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher,

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene."—Mark 16: 9.

TOPIC.—THE SAVIOUR RISEN.

HOME READINGS.

M. Ps. 16 : 1-10.....Not to Suffer Corruption.
T. Is. 26 : 1-19.....His Body to Arise.
W. Matt. 20 : 17-28.....To Rise the Third Day.
Th. Mark. 9 : 1-13.....Transfiguration and Resurrection.
F. 1 Cor. 15 : 1-28.....If not Risen, our Faith is Vain.
S. Rom. 4 : 13-25.....Raised for our Justification.
S. Rom. 6 : 1-23.....Dead with Christ—Alive in Him.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE SEPULCHER.—*Where* was the sepulcher in which Christ was laid? 19: 41. What sort of one was it? Matt. 27: 60. Who owned it? Matt. 27: 57–60. What was said in prophecy about this? Is. 53: 9. What was done to the sepulcher by the Jews? Matt. 27: 63–66. How large was the stone? Mark 16: 4.

MARY.—*Seeking.*—Who were the last ones to leave the tomb? Matt. 27: 61. Who do you think the "other Mary" was? Who came first to the sepulcher on the first day of the week? John 20: 1. What day is that now? Was it Sunday then? What did she see? 1. What did she do? 2. Why do you suppose that she *ran?* What did she say to Peter and John? 2. What did these two disciples do? 3–8. Who got there first? 4. Who went in first? 6. When John went in what did he do? 8. *What did he believe?* Ask your teacher about it. What did the two disciples finally do? 10. Of what were they ignorant? 9.

Sorrowing.—Did Mary go away when they did? 11. What three things did she do? 11. Whom did she see? 12. What did they say to her? 13. What reply did she make? What mistake did she make? Read verse 14, and see if you think that the angels comforted her any? Whom did she see? Why was it, do you suppose, that she did not know him? Perhaps she could not see for her tears. Was she looking for a *living* Saviour?

Rejoicing.—What two things did Christ say to her? Did she have any real cause for weeping? Why? Whom did she suppose Jesus to be? *Is* he, in any sense, a "gardener"? How? How did Jesus make himself known to her? 16. What is that like in 10: 14? What did she reply? What did she attempt to do to him? 17. Why did he tell her not to? What message did he give her? By what name did he call his disciples? What was the first thing she told them? 18. Do you think Christ can always readily be found by those who seek him?

LESSON OUTLINE.

A TRIUMPHANT SAVIOUR.

THE SEPULCHER.

1.—DESCRIBED:

"In the garden a new sepulcher." John 19: 41.
"Was nigh at hand." Matt. 19: 42.
"Hewn out in the rock." Matt. 27: 60.
"A rich man—laid it in his own tomb." Matt. 27: 57–60.
"Made his grave—with the rich." Is. 53: 9.

2.—SEALED:

"Rolled a great stone to the door." Matt. 27: 60,
"It was very great." Mark 16: 4.
"Make it as sure as ye can." Matt. 27: 65.
"Sealing the stone and setting a watch." Matt. 27: 66.

3.—SEAL BROKEN:

"Angel—rolled back the stone." Matt. 28: 2.
"Stone was rolled away." Mark 16: 4.
"Seeth the stone taken away." John 20: 1.

4.—GRAVE EMPTY:

"Found not the body." Luke 24: 3.
"They have taken away the Lord." John 20: 2.
"Saw the linen clothes lying." John 20: 5.
"He is not here, he is risen." Mark 16: 6.

THE SORROWING DISCIPLES.

1.—ALARMED:

"Then she runneth." John 20: 2.
"Have taken away the Lord." 20: 2.
"Both ran together." 20: 4.
"Mary stood without—weeping." 20: 11.
"Knew not—he must rise." 20: 9.

2.—BEHOLD:

"Young man—long, white garment." Mark 16: 5.
"Two men—in shining garments." Luke 24: 4.
"Angel of the Lord." Matt. 28: 2.
"Two angels in white." 20: 12.

3.—ARE REASSURED:

"Fear not ye." Matt. 28: 5.
"Why weepest thou?" John 20: 13.
"He is not here, he is risen." Matt. 28: 6.
"He goeth before you into Galilee." Matt. 28: 7.
"Remember how he spake." Luke 24: 6.

4.—HOW AFFECTED:

a.) Those who heard.

"Departed—with fear and great joy." Matt. 28: 8.
"Trembled and were amazed—afraid." Mark 16: 8.

b.) Those who were told.

"Their words—as idle tales." Luke 24: 11.
"When they had heard—believed not." Mark 16: 11.

THE SAVIOUR.

1.—RESURRECTION PREDICTED:

a.) By the Prophets.

"Neither—Holy One to see corruption." Ps. 16: 10.
"With my dead body shall they arise." Is. 26: 19.

b.) By Himself.

"The third day he shall rise again." Matt. 20: 19.
"Till the Son of man were risen." Mark 9. 9.
"After that I am risen." Mark 14: 28.
"Destroy this temple—I will raise it up." John 2: 19.

2.—PREDICTIONS FULFILLED:

a.) Was seen.

"Appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Mark 16: 9.
"Behold Jesus met them." Matt. 28: 9.

b.) Was heard.

"Be not afraid—tell my brethren." Matt. 28: 10.
"Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" John 20: 15.
"Mary!" 20: 16.
"Touch me not—not yet ascended." 20: 17.

c.) Was Touched.

"Held him by the feet and worshiped." Matt. 28: 9.

HIS SLAYERS.

1.—THEIR PRECAUTION:

"That deceiver said—I will rise." Matt. 27: 63.
"Command therefore—sepulcher—sure." 27: 64.
"Made sepulcher sure." 27: 66.

2.—THEIR FINAL PLOT:

"Watch—shewed—priests all." Matt. 28: 11.
"Gave large money to the soldiers." 28: 12.
"Say ye, His disciples—stole him." 28: 13.
"Took—money—did as taught." 28: 15.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

PRELIMINARY.—The accounts of the resurrection given by the four evangelists differ so that it is impossible to make any but hypothetical harmonies from the narratives. No one of them gives a complete view of its events. It is useless to take the separate glimpses which they give and attempt to put them together as one would a piece of Mosaic, expecting that, upon being joined, a perfect, harmonious picture will be the result. From them all a picture can, indeed, be constructed which shows that the scenes which each saw were parts of the same scene, but, as they wrote without collusion, it is not strange that in joining them together there are some parts that will not fit in. Had they written as imposters write, there would have been no such impracticable corners. As it is, we feel sure, and that is the main thing, of the honesty of the narrators. And as, in the main, they agree, we can afford to pass by their apparent discrepancies, both as unimportant, and also as capable of full reconciliation did we but fully understand all the facts.

What are the discrepancies? 1.—In the *time*. Mark gives the visitation of the tomb by the women as at sunrise—John says: "While it was yet dark." 2.—Matthew and Mark speak of only *one* angelic appearance; Luke and John speak of *two*. 3.—In Mark and Luke these appearances are referred to as *men*, while the others speak of them as *angels*. 4.—Mark says that the women told no man anything, while the other three declare that they informed the disciples of what had occurred. 5.—John speaks of one woman; Matthew of two; Mark of three; Luke of five or more. None of these dissimilar statements are absolutely contradictory—they are merely unlike. Let us see how it may be that they do not really conflict. A possible explanation is all that can be asked. 1.—From the account given in John it would seem that when she first came to the tomb, Mary Magdalene was alone. She may, therefore, have gotten there "when it was yet dark," and soon been followed by others. 2—As to angels being one or two, that is easily enough accounted for on the hypothesis that sometimes there were two, sometimes only one; or, that, in their tumult, some of the eye-witnesses saw and reported only one; others more collected, noted both. 3.—For the same reason, to some they would be as men, while others would readily see their celestial character. See John 12: 28, 29. 4.—In the only instance where it is said: "Neither said they anything to any man," it will be noticed that the fact that they were charged with a message is expressly declared. Mark 16: 7. This message, no doubt, as stated by the other evangelists, they delivered to the disciples, but that day they indeed said nothing to "any man," while on their errand. That day, we may be sure, they wanted to talk with no one but brethren. 5.—John does not say that there was only *one* at the sepulcher. He only records the fact that Mary arrived there first "when it was yet dark." Matthew does not say that there were only two, nor does Mark say that there were no more than three. They *all* make Mary Magdalene the central figure. Making her stand out singly, as does John, or, as in the other gospels, making her the prominent one of a group of two or more, accordingly as it occurs to them to make mention of others. These are the main "inconsistencies!" So long as the objectors find no more vulnerable point of attack, they never will make any wide breach in our faith.

THE SEPULCHER—Was made sure by unfriendly hands. It is well to observe the cumulative proofs of his death. It was first announced by the soldiers. Mark 15: 39. It was made sure by that last heart-thrust, when his side was pierced by one of them; by the enmity of the priests, who petitioned to have the legs of the sufferers broken; by the strict enquiry of Pilate, who could not

believe it to be so until he had sent for the centurion and questioned him; by his burial by his friends, and the sealing of the tomb by his enemies. There can be no question of his death, no accounting for that transient stay in the grave on the supposition of a trance, and so there can be no question of his resurrection. In making sure the stone of the sepulcher, the enemies of Christ set their seal to the fact that his death was no sham. He is veritably and undeniably a risen Saviour.

It is pleasant to think that the dead Christ developed unexpected friends. While the most of his nearest followers forsook him and were scattered, two men of high rank and station, hitherto deterred from so boldly professing their faith in him, came forward and claimed the crucified one as their friend. Joseph, the rich man of Arimathea, begged the body of Pilate, bought fine linen and wrapped him in it, and laid him in his own new tomb, where never man laid, and Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes for his embalming. The time which to some is the hour of death, is the natal hour of heroes. And their action was heroic. Even the thief on the cross saw some remarkable manifestations of a still living Christ to awaken his faith. But these men rallied around a lifeless body, and believed in a dead Christ.

Mary Seeking.—When the stone was rolled to the door of the sepulcher the last ones to leave were Mary Magdalene and one, the pathos of whose presence there is strongly presented in the term, "the other Mary." It is so near the Sabbath that the body has been hastily wrapped in spices and fine linen, awaiting the more elaborate embalming to follow the day after. After Joseph and Nicodemus and the helping women have left the tomb, the two Marys sit together "over against the sepulcher," sorrowful and alone. We can only guess at the long mournful vigil they kept there. It is left only to our imagination, also, to realize how sad and long and wearisome were the hours of the Sabbath. But we may be sure that they moved as slowly as if they also were bereft of life. We can gain some idea of the impatience of that long day by the fact that "when it was yet dark," on the next morning, Mary was at the door of the sepulcher. On her way thither she has been wondering: "who shall roll us away the stone?" The fact that the stone is there troubles her as she comes along, but when she finds it gone—that troubles her a great deal more. Her immediate surmise is—that his enemies have stolen away his body. To that idea she adheres with strong pertinacity. See verses 2, 13, 15. This conviction lends her wings as she runs, and breathlessly she bursts in upon Peter and John with the exclamation: "*They have taken away the Lord!*" It is to be noticed that though she came first and alone to the sepulcher, she must have seen and talked with the other women, for she says: "*We* know not where they have laid him"—an incidental proof that, after all, in respect to the numbers there is no real discrepancy in the narratives.

The Disciples Startled.—The two disciples do not at first seem to realize the full force of what Mary has told them. The gradual way in which it came to them is manifest in the description of their going to the sepulcher. They "went forth," they "ran together," the other disciple did "outrun" Peter. First they *walked*, very fast, probably, then, as they began to fully apprehend the consequences of what they supposed was a robbery of the grave, they *ran*, and very soon, began *to run with all their might*. And the love that had never been for a moment untrue had the swiftest feet, for John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," was first at the grave. The behaviour of the two men is characteristic. Though John gets there first, Peter is the first to go in. John stands reverently without, noting the place where the Lord lay, and seeing the linen clothes lying. Peter takes note of nothing, but rushes

hurriedly in. Then he sees the linen clothes by themselves, and the napkin, which had been folded about the head, lying, orderly, wrapped up, at some distance from them. That reverential, thoughtful pause of John outside had given him time to think and compare. The grave-clothes were not taken away as they would have been had the grave been rifled. The linen clothes, separated and laid away, tell of no robber's haste, but of a calm spirit that ruled when they were laid aside. The tomb looked, as really was the case, as if its sleeper had awaked, and, unhurriedly, changed the cerements of the tomb for the robes of immortality. These things John appears rapidly to have remarked and digested, and when *he* enters the sepulcher, it is said: "He saw and believed." Believed what? The story that Mary had told him? It is a suggestion unworthy of the eminent Bible critics who have made it. The truth of that, of course, he accepted, when, upon the outside, he saw the stone rolled away, the empty grave, and the linen clothes lying folded. When he came in he must have believed something more than that. Can we doubt that, though he did not yet "know the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead," he saw enough to believe that he had risen? "*He* saw and believed," but of Peter, far less reflective and thoughtful, it is said he departed, "wondering in himself at that which was come to pass." He had seen matter enough only for wonder—John had seen enough to awake his faith. And so it often is with relation to the *words* which Christ has left us; one will catch in them hints of an immortal life, while another will only wonder what they have in them that gives his companion such peace and comfort.

MARY SORROWING.—Slower than the fleet-footed John and Peter, Mary returns to the tomb. Perhaps she does not arrive until they have gone away. Certain, however, it is that she was there after they had gone, and was uncomforted. Apparently she had not seen the linen clothes and the folded napkin, and so had not read the story of hope they told. She stood without the sepulcher weeping, and, stooping down, she looked in, and saw "two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain." Christ had been crucified between two thieves, but now, the place where he had lain, as though it were another place holy as that of the mercy-seat, was guarded by two celestial beings. It is marvelous how little impression these angelic visitants make upon Mary. She sees them, but her eye does not dwell upon them. She seeks one higher than they, and until she finds Him she can not be comforted. They ask her why she is weeping, and she tells the cause of her grief as a child might tell it—and then turns away from them! What can they do for her, the body of whose Lord is stolen? Perhaps her tears hid their celestial character from her eyes. For the same reason, it may be, she is unable to recognize the Lord himself, but supposes him the gardener of the rich Joseph of Arimathea. Probably that and the fact that she was looking for a dead Christ, and not a living one, are enough to account for the fact that she does not immediately know him, without supposing, as some do, that the fashion of his face was altered. Now follows a touching proof of her love. Supposing him to be the gardener, and, as having authority over the place, that *he* may have caused the removal of the body, she begs him: "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." She measured her power by the strength of her love when she said that. And, think you that Jesus could have had a better answer, when, testing her, he asked: "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?"

MARY REJOICING.—Tears were never long a hindrance to one seeking the Saviour. Were they ever a hindrance at all? Who was it that first found the risen Christ but the weeping Mary? Where he is most wanted, there he is first.

Tears attract him, for he loves to wipe all tears away. Here he did it with a word: "MARY!" How tenderly he must have said that! How the tones must have thrilled her, that voluntarily she cried out: "RABBONI!"—My Teacher!—and, throwing herself before him, endeavored to clasp his feet. We have only a conversation of two words to unlock for us the supreme moment of her life, but they are enough. A volume could not tell more. *Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?* A moment ago these questions fell on unheeding ears. But now she can see that the one she mourned for as dead was alive, and the one she sought for was at her side. She had learned what repentant sinners so often find it so hard to learn, that when she was most in sorrow she had most occasion to rejoice, and that the Saviour was the nearest when she had the least hope of finding him. Further than that, *the Saviour spoke to her and she did not know it.* Has no one, in seeking him, had a similar experience?

HER REBUKE.—Why she was told not to touch him—"hold me not," rather, is the real meaning—when the other women were permitted to worship him, holding him by the feet (Matt. 28:9), has been the puzzle of scholars. One construction has been put forward that to us seems to solve the difficulty. She was prohibited from holding him, not *because* he had not yet ascended, but because he was not yet going to ascend, and therefore there was no occasion for her to fear but what she would see him again. And now we add to this our own surmise, that Mary probably *did* clasp his feet in her worship of him, and such was her joy and transport at again seeing him restored, that finally he had gently to release himself, saying: "Hold me not, for I am not yet ascended." That very probable supposition makes everything clear and consistent.

HER MESSAGE.—In the intensity of her rapture she has forgotten those to whom the news will be just as much of a joy. Gently she is reminded of this fact by being intrusted with a message to them. And what a message it is! It is remarkable, first, in its address—"Brethren!" Never before had he so called them. When, by reason of sharing their nature, he would seem to have been nearer to a brotherhood with them than now, he had gone no further than to say: "I call you not servants, but friends." Now, when he naturally would appear to have drawn away from all closer intimacies with them, by passing from the mortal to the immortal, from the lowly to the kingly, instead, he enters into a still closer relationship—that of brotherhood. The living Christ was a friend—the crucified and risen Christ is a brother! Christ had just laid down his life for their sakes. Before he had shown them what his friendship was—now he had exhibited a devotion that demanded a sweeter title. And, as we have the most affection towards those for whom we have just made the greatest sacrifices, it may be that his own recent sacrifice of himself for them made it necessary to use a stronger term than that of *friend* to express his own love toward them, and the warmer feeling that henceforth they should give him.

Jesus shows that the title of "brethren" is not one whose meaning ceases in conveying to them an expression of his fraternal affection. He makes it carry, besides, all its most remote logical consequences. In telling them, through Mary, of his coming ascension, it is—"unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Brotherhood with Christ means sonship with the Father. They had lost a *friend*—they gained a *brother and a Father.* They had been called the friends of Christ—now they were called sons of God. How thoroughly they were now beginning to realize that it was "expedient" for him, as he had said, to go away.

We can rest assured that this tumultuously happy woman did not deliver her message in any apathetic way. Indeed, she was not ready to deliver her message until she had given her testimony first.

Bursting excitedly in on the little band of weeping disciples, she thrills them with her declaration: "I HAVE SEEN THE LORD!" Then she repeats his words, passionately and vehemently, or we misinterpret her warm temperament, and over-estimate the power of that great event to set her heart on fire. Let us not marvel at nor condemn those to whom the message was sent if they soon recovered from being startled with the announcement, and declared that what she had seen was a vision of her own over-heated imagination. "And they, when they had heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, believed not."

Scintillations.

1.—Many a soul needlessly mourns an absent Saviour when all the time he is close at hand. Deut. 4:7; Ps. 46:1; 145:18; Cant. 3:1-4; Eph. 2:13.

2.—The greater is the distress of the one seeking the sooner and the closer does Christ come. 2 K. 22:19; Job. 5:11; Ps. 34:18; 147:3; Is. 61:1; 66:2.

3.—But the main thought in the lesson seems to be: "Ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. 29:13; Ps. 118:5; Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9, 10; Jas. 1:5, 6; 1 John 5:14.

4.—Mary only asked to have restored to her the body of her dead Saviour, and lo! her cry was answered by his living presence. And so it always is—"above all we can ask or think." Ps. 16:11; 31:19; Is. 64:4; Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 4:7.

5.—Infinite love has descended to earth and called us brethren. But there is a still greater glory in store for us. John says that "now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." His conception of that still higher eminence is that—"we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2; Ps. 17:15; 1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 4:6; 6:17, 18; 7:1; Phil. 3:21.

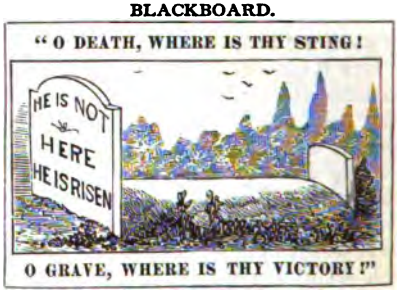
6.—Mary mourned before an empty sepulcher. The Lord she sorrowed for was not there, but was risen. And by his resurrection he overcame death, so that we, also, when we mourn the death of loved ones, sorrow before a tenantless grave. They whom we miss are risen in Christ. Hos. 13:14; John 11:25; 14:19; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:16, 26; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Pet. 1:3.

HYMN.

Ring, ring the bells over ocean and shore,
Jesus, the Risen, shall suffer no more;
Jesus, the Risen, is mighty to save;
Where is thy strength and thy vict'ry, O grave?

Ring, ring the tidings with joy in the chime,
Down thro' the shadows of error and crime;
Ring to the spirit of bondman and free,
"Jesus is risen, and liveth for thee."

BLACKBOARD.



THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Tell how the enemies of Christ, knowing that he had said he would rise again the third day, made sure the sepulcher. His friends, not knowing that he had so said, rolled a heavy stone to the door of the cave, and then the Jews put a seal on the stone, and placed a guard of soldiers over the cave to watch it. If anybody broke that seal he would be put to death. But in the night there was an earthquake, and an angel came down and rolled the stone away, and for fear of him the keepers became as dead men.

2. Who were the last ones at the sepulcher when Christ was buried? Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus. Tell what they were doing there—who got the body of Christ—in whose tomb he was laid—what sort it was—how they fixed the body—and then left it, for the Sabbath day was at hand.

3.—Mary first at the tomb—before day (what love that showed!)—discovers the empty sepulcher—what she thinks—what she does (runs and tells Peter and John.) They go—run—run with all their might to the sepulcher—John reaches there first—stoops and looks in—what he sees—what he *thinks* (that Christ's body has not been stolen, because the clothes are not taken away, and arranged so orderly)—Peter comes up—rushes in—what *he* sees (clothes and napkin lying apart)—John comes in—sees and believes that Christ is risen—but Peter "wonders." The two go home.

4.—Mary again at the tomb. Weeping, she looks in—sees two angels—what they ask her—her reply—the little notice she takes of them, because her heart is crying for her Lord. Then she sees the Lord himself, but thinks he is the gardener. Why? Does not expect to see Christ living, and

can not see well because of her tears. The conversation: "Mary!" "Rabboni!"—what it meant.

5.—"Do not hold me"—so long. The message. Why Christ called them "brethren." If Christ was their brother, then what was God to them? "My Father and your Father—my God and your God." Christ as our Brother and God as our Father.

HYMN.

Glory, glory to our King!
Crowns unfading wreath his head;
Jesus is the name we sing—
Jesus, risen from the dead;
Jesus, conqueror o'er the grave;
Jesus, mighty now to save.

Now behold him high enthroned,
Glory beaming from his face,
By adoring angels owned,
God of holiness and grace:
Oh for hearts and tongues to sing,
Glory, glory to our King!

BLACKBOARD.

CHRIST HAS RISEN,
Has Ascended
TO

HIS	FATHER
AND	
OUR	GOD.

LESSON L.—DEC. 12, 1875.—JESUS AND THOMAS.

SCRIPTURE.—John **20:24-31.** Commit **24-29**; Primary Verse, **29.**

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.
25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.
26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.
27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.
28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.
29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.
30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:
31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Believe in the Lord your God; so shall ye be established."—2 CHRON. 20:29.

TOPIC.—The Blessedness of Faith.

HOME READINGS.

M. Is. 53: 1-12....."Who hath Believed our Report?"
T. Heb. 3: 1-19....."An Evil Heart of Unbelief."
W. John 8: 1-21..... Unbelief is Condemnation.
Th. John 10: 24-42..... Miracles Wrought for our Faith.
F. Heb. 11: 1-40..... Faith Defined and Illustrated.
S. 1 Cor. 12: 1-11..... Source of Faith.
S. Gal. 3: 1-29..... Law and Faith.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THOMAS ABSENT.—On what occasion was it that Thomas was absent? 19, 24. How many, then, were present? What had they done "for fear of the Jews"? 19. And yet who came and stood in the midst? What did he say? 19. What effect did his appearing among them have on the disciples? Luke 24:37. What did he say to allay their fear? Luke 24:38. What did he tell them to do to him? Luke 24:39. What did he then show them? 20. Did they then believe? Luke 24:41. Read the next two verses and see what else he did to make them believe it was actually himself, and not a spirit? When he had convinced them of this what then did he do? Mark 16:14. What did he tell them to do? Mark 16:15. What was to happen to those who heard? Mark 16:17; John 20:23.

What wonderful signs were to follow? Mark 16: 17, 18. *Did* these signs come to pass? Acts 5: 16; 8: 7; 16: 18; 28: 1-5. What special gift did Christ give them then? John 20: 22.

THOMAS DOUBTING.—When Thomas was told all these things what did he say? 25. How many things did he think were necessary for him in order to believe? Look in 2 Cor. 4: 4 and see what it is that prevents people from believing on Christ. In Heb. 3: 12 you will find what sort of a heart unbelievers have. See in Heb. 11: 6 what it is not possible to do without faith. What does John 3: 18 say of the unbeliever? What is his punishment? Rev. 21: 8. Are *you* a believer or an unbeliever?

THOMAS BELIEVING.—How long was it before Jesus appeared again to the disciples? 26. Was Thomas there then? Was Christ's coming as wonderful as before? What did he say to Thomas? 27. *Did Thomas do it?* What did he say? 28. Was Thomas right, then, in what he said in verse 25? Are there any persons more blessed than they who saw the risen Lord? 29. Do the gospels give *all* the miracles that Christ did? 30. Why were we told about the ones they do give? 31.

LESSON OUTLINE.

UNBELIEF AND FAITH.

"Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

UNBELIEF OF THOMAS.

1.—OBSTINATE:

"Except I see—put—thrust." 25

2.—REJECTED:

a.) What others had seen.

"He appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Mark 16: 9.
"He appeared—unto two of them." Mark 16: 12.
("Was known of them in breaking of bread." Luke 24: 35.)
("Did not our hearts burn within us?" Luke 24: 32.)
"The Lord—hath appeared to Simon." Luke 24: 34.
"To the eleven as they sat at meat." Mark 16: 14.
"He shewed unto them his hands and his side." John 20: 20.
"Did eat before them." Luke 24: 43.

b.) What others had heard.

1.—In Salutation.

"Jesus met them saying, All hail." Matt. 28: 9.
"Mary!" John 20: 16.
"Peace be unto you!" John 20: 19.

2.—In Rebuke.

"Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended." John 20: 17.
"Upbraided them with their unbelief." Mark 16: 14.

3.—When Commissioned.

"Go ye into all the world and preach." Mark 16: 15.
"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John 20: 22.
"Sins ye remit, they are remitted." John 20: 23.

4.—When Promised Signs.

"In my name shall they cast out devils." Mark 16: 17.
"They shall take up serpents." 16: 18.
"Drink any deadly thing—not hurt them." 16: 18.
"Lay hands on sick—shall recover." 16: 18.

c.) What others had felt.

"Came and held him by the feet." Matt. 28: 9.

UNBELIEF OF SINNERS.

1.—ITS SOURCE.

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds." 2 Cor. 4: 4.
"Of sin, because they believe not on me." John 16: 9.
"When divers were hardened." Acts 19: 9.
"Slow of heart to believe." Luke 24: 25.
"An evil heart of unbelief." Heb. 3: 12.

2.—ITS SINFULNESS.

"They sinned still, and believed not." Ps. 78: 32.
"O faithless and perverse generation!" Matt. 17: 17.
"He could do there no mighty work." Mark 6: 5.
"Without faith it is impossible to please him." Heb. 11. 6.
"Be ye not—yoked—with unbelievers." 2 Cor. 6: 14.

3.—ITS PENALTY.

a.) As to the Jews.

"Could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3: 19.
"The Lord—destroyed them that believed not." Jude 5.
"Because of unbelief were broken off." Rom. 11: 20.

b.) As to all.

"He that believeth not is condemned." John 3: 18.
"Shall not see life." John 3: 36.
"Shall be damned." Mark 16: 16.
"If ye believe not—shall die in your sins." John 8: 24.
"Unbelieving—have their part in the lake." Rev. 21: 8.

FAITH.

1.—WHAT IT IS:

"Substance of things hoped for." Heb. 11: 1.
"Evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11: 1.
"We look not at things—seen." 2 Cor. 4: 18.
"The shield." Eph. 6: 16.

2.—ITS SUBJECTS:

"Walk by faith, and not by sight." 2 Cor. 5: 7.
"Whom having not seen ye love." 1 Pet. 1: 8.
"Endure as seeing him who is invisible." Heb. 11: 27.
"I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. 2: 20.
"Thou standest by faith." Rom. 11: 20.
"He that overcometh—believeth." 1 John 5: 5.

3.—ITS GIFTS:

"We—rejoice in hope." Rom. 5: 2.
"Joy and peace in believing." Rom. 15: 13.
"Believeth on him shall not be confounded." 1 Pet. 2: 6.
"Unto you which believe he is precious." 1 Pet. 2: 7.

4.—ITS SOURCE:

"It is the gift of God." Eph. 2: 8.
"Unto you it is given—to believe." Phil. 1. 29.
"Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12: 2.
"To another faith by the same Spirit." 1 Cor. 12: 9.
"Scriptures—make thee wise—through faith." 2 Tim. 3: 15.

5.—AIDS TO:

"These are written that ye might believe." John 20: 31.
"These things—written—that ye may know." 1 John 5: 13.

"*Lord, increase our faith.*" Luke 17: 5.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THOMAS ABSENT.—With good reason do nearly all the commentators argue that in such a man as Thomas, his absence from the first gathering of the disciples on the evening of the resurrection day, had some special import in it. His staying away, by almost universal assent, was designed, and was indicative of his surrender of the cause. His faith, evidently, had been wrecked by the cross. Belonging to those exact natures that must have demonstration before faith, when he found that death was greater than Christ, with all his miraculous powers—what had he left? As the sum of all the wonderful deeds of the Saviour were nothing, his faith also became a cipher. He was the logician of the band, and logic inexorably pointed to the fact that the end was reached. Given: a living Christ miraculously empowered, and great results were sure to follow. But what could a dead Christ do? And so, despondent and wretched, as one whose hopes are all wrecked, Thomas, we may imagine, sought to hide himself, his sorrow and his despair.

Christ and the Ten.—But what a meeting did this one miss who so confidently pronounced upon the failure of the kingdom of Christ! In the evening the other disciples, many of them not more believing than he, probably, but desiring comfort and companionship from each other, met in a room whose doors were shut for fear of persecution from the Jews. And while they were at meat, and listening to the wonderful account of the two disciples who had been journeying to Emmaus, and of the Saviour's appearance to Peter, Christ himself stood in the midst! John lays special emphasis on the fact that the doors were shut, and yet "he came and stood in their midst." John mentions only the fact that he showed unto them his hands and his side, but the wonder of his sudden appearance among them is increased by the account given by Luke. He adds that because the disciples were affrighted and thought Christ was a spirit, he said unto them: "Handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Luke also records that in further proof of his being bodily present he ate a piece of broiled fish and an honeycomb. From the first verse of the First Epistle of John it seems probable that this invitation of Christ to test his corporeity was accepted, and that the disciples actually did put their hands upon the risen body of our Lord. In the matter of rebuke for unbelief, our attention has been so entirely centered upon "doubting Thomas" that the fact that the other disciples were also reproved for the same fault has not had its due effect. They were "doubters" fully as much as Thomas. It is a question if they were not more so, for, as we have seen, it is probable that the testimony of their eyes was not sufficient for them, while Thomas without further test ejaculated: "My Lord and my God!" The reproof administered to Thomas certainly was a gentle one, while the others, as deserving more, were "upbraided" with their unbelief.

Disciples commissioned.—But not only did the absentee lose Christ's first gracious salutation, "Peace be with you!" and this early proof of his resurrection, but, what was of more consequence, he missed the commission that was given to the others, and the first breath of the Holy Ghost. Christ "breathed on them, and saith unto them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" The gift of the Holy Ghost was like the breath of a friend upon the cheek. How quietly and how peacefully would he take possession of all hearts, if men would only let him! Instead of a torturing rebuke, as many men fear his presence would be, it is like a balm for the wounded spirit. This gift of the Holy Ghost was, without doubt, the precursor only of that larger endowment which came afterward, upon the day of Pentecost. They were told to go into all the world and preach the gospel

to every creature. How suddenly and how widely was their field enlarged! How their narrow Judaic horizon receded at that command until they saw the whole world included within the scope of their commission!

Among the other things which Christ confers upon his now re-heartened disciples is the power to remit and retain sins. 23. Supposing that the words in which that is expressed have their most obvious meaning, they are said, be it noted, just after the gift of the Holy Ghost, and therefore it was that divine Spirit in them, and not themselves, that so certainly was to pronounce the ban and the blessing. The probability, however, seems to be that it does not have much more, if any, meaning than that which is recorded in the parallel passage in Mark (16: 16), where, after the commission to preach is given, it is said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Whoever heard and repented, their sins were remitted; whoever heard and repented not, their sins were retained. Possibly there may be included in this, however, a more infallible judgment in respect to determining real repentance than inheres in the church of to-day, as witness the several cases in Acts 5: 1-11; 8: 21; 13: 9. That the disciples never supposed that their powers went beyond that of detection is evident from Peter's declaration: "*Him* hath God exalted to give forgiveness of sins." Acts 5: 31. They, at least, believed that none but Christ had power on earth to forgive sins. The similar passage in Matt. 16: 19 is subject to a like interpretation, or, possibly, to one varying a little from it because of the fact that in that case it is "*whatsoever*" instead of "whosesoever."

Their Joy.—The absent disciple lost this also. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Christ himself had but a little while before given a photograph, as it were, of this meeting. Read John 16: 19–22, and see how faithful was the portraiture of this gathering. "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice." How true that had been! "And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." And now that, too, had come to pass, while henceforth, "your joy no man taketh from you." It was to be in the heart thenceforward, where men could not reach it. And it was to be the day of great things, for Christ then also said of this time: "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing—verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." How truly expedient was it that he should go away!

THOMAS DOUBTING.—Thomas does something more than doubt. His declaration that he will not believe except he can put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into the gaping wound made by the spear, is virtually a denial of the reality of the things which have been told him by the other disciples. They had testified to him that they had *seen* the wounds made by the nails and spear, and, as has been remarked, also probably put their hands upon the risen Christ, but he declares that such evidence is not enough for him; he must not only see the wounds, but explore them also. In no way could he more strongly have expressed his incredulity. As some one has said, Thomas carried all his faith at the ends of his fingers.

As we have seen, however, Thomas was not the only doubter—probably not the greatest one among the incredulous. While, in view of all their previous instructions and experiences, faith in the resurrection marvels should have found a readier entrance into their hearts, and, for not easily admitting which they received a most deserved rebuke, yet we can not help but perceive how much we are debtors to their unbelief. No one can read any one of the four accounts and not see that the story in each case is conscientiously told. From first to last it is self-condemnatory, because of the slowness of their hearts to believe. In no way do they try to shield themselves from censure, but, while unhesitatingly

taking the blame that belongs to them, in doing it they show that the appearances they witnessed were actually real, and not imaginary phenomena which they over-credulously received and exalted into facts. The "loved" disciple, perhaps, excepted, each one, as it were, had to be convinced by a special manifestation. No one of them, in fact, gave in his belief on account of what he had been told. Mary was looking for a dead Christ when she found a living one. She did not mistake a gardener for the risen Saviour, but the resurrected Lord for a gardener. Her story and that of the other women who had met and worshiped Jesus, holding him by the feet, were not eagerly siezed upon by the disciples, and, without further evidence, taken as true—"their words seemed to them as idle tales." Even when the Saviour actually stood in the midst of the ten, "they yet believed not for joy." Luke 24:41. It seemed to them "too good to be true," and they feared that their eyes and ears were deceiving them. The two disciples going to Emmaus did not readily see, nor soon admit that he who so wonderfully expounded the Scriptures and made their hearts burn within them, was the one whom they knew had died and been buried. And, last of all, we have Thomas setting at naught the experiences of all the rest, and declaring that without a severer test than any they had tried, he would not believe. Indeed, throughout all the troubled events of the cross, and the sojourn in the grave and resurrection from it, it is a singular fact that the enemies of Christ were the first to remember his prophecy of resurrection, and to give credence to it when it occurred. And for the sake of our own firmer faith in the resurrection facts, we are glad that it was so.

THOMAS BELIEVING.—It is well to keep in mind the fact so well set forth by our valued contributor, Rev. Lyman Abbott, in the first article in this month's issue, that Thomas was an unwilling disbeliever. He and the other disciples desired to believe, but could not. When proof came to them it was welcome. Would it have ever come had it not been? To the honest doubter God says: "Come let us reason together," and promises that "if any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine." But the Sphinx is not more silent than is God when his name is called upon by mocking skeptics, and he is summoned to come forth and show whether he be the Lord or no! It was this desire on the part of the disciples to believe, that secured for them the presence of Christ, and for Thomas the opportunity to carry out his test. "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." But Thomas put forth neither finger nor hand, for he had found out that such a test was unnecessary. His conviction that he saw the real Christ before him and that this Christ was divine is expressed in his adoring cry: "My Lord, and my God!" It was the highest recognition of Christ's divinity yet given. Peter had told Christ that he was "the Son of the living God," but here was he confessed as one with God himself. And so the one who was the last to believe seems, for the moment, at least, best to have comprehended the full meaning of this self-restoration to life.

The experience of Thomas is not an uncommon one. Many a man has said, like him, that certain absolute demonstrations were necessary for them to have faith in Christ. And yet, when, in some supreme moment of the soul, the scales have fallen from their eyes and they have beheld the Crucified and Risen One, they have exclaimed with Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" Of a sudden the proofs that they had hitherto deemed indispensable shrank into unsatisfactory puerility beside the larger demonstration that the soul had found in the Saviour himself. And among these the writer gratefully includes himself.

But with Thomas' recovered faith in Christ comes a rebuke from the Saviour's lips, which seems spoken as much

for our encouragement as for his confession: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." There is, then, a better proof than seeing and touching. Our eyes and our fingers may be deceived. All attempts to investigate spiritual phenomena with material tests must be failures, more or less. Religion, though not divorced from reason, is, after all, more a matter of the heart than the intellect. The heart only can know its own needs, and what it is that satisfies them. The judgment often says to the heart that with certain reasons it ought to be satisfied—but it is not. It never is contented until it obtains for nourishment Christ as The Bread of Life, and then its own peace, and growth in all the sweeter graces testify how much more unerring than reason is its choice. "With the heart," and not with the head, "man believeth unto righteousness." Living in the time when "we walk by faith and not by sight," let us remember, therefore, that we are not to mourn because we have missed the day of miracles and of the personal presence of Christ, but to rejoice that we see the era made more potent by the exercise of faith and the power of the Holy Ghost. Still those former days are now not without their use. Every miracle and every sign which Christ then gave help to give wings to our faith, and so enable it to fly. "These," says John, in our lesson, "are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name."

Scintillations.

1.—It is not a good thing to miss even one meeting of the disciples. The evening that you stay away from the prayer-meeting may be the one when Christ is most specially manifest. There is a blessing promised when two or three are met together. Ps. 145: 18; Matt. 18: 19, 20; Acts 2: 46; 4: 24–32; 12: 5, 12; Heb. 3: 12, 13; 10: 24, 25; Jas. 5: 14, 16.

2.—Instead of staying away from him and his saints when one is troubled with doubts, then is the time especially when one should seek the Lord and obtain comfort from his people. Ps. 34: 3, 4; 50: 15; 77: 2; 91: 14, 15; 94: 14; 107: 6; Lam. 3: 31–33; Rom. 11: 2; Jas. 5: 13.

3.—How presumptuous it is for any one to say that God, who has an infinite number of ways to manifest himself, can do so, satisfactorily to himself, only in one way. What rules shall we prescribe for the Almighty, and what measures have we with which we can measure him! Job 11: 7–10; Ps. 77: 19; 139: 6–8; Is. 55: 9; Jer. 23: 23, 24; Rom. 11: 33.

4.—It was enough to secure again the presence of Christ that there was one of his disciples who did not believe in his resurrection. It was the "one" for whom he was always seeking. He came not for many, but for one—each one. Ps. 119: 176; Matt. 18: 14; Luke 15: 7, 10, 32.

5.—The cry of Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" was a cry of joy. Believing brings peace. Rom. 5: 1–5; 12: 12; 15: 13; 14: 17; 2 Thess. 2: 16; 1 Pet. 1: 8.

HYMN.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

BLACKBOARD.

THE RISEN CHRIST
Says to US:
"BE NOT FAITHLESS,
BUT BELIEVING."

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Try to make the children realize how gloomy and despondent the disciples must have felt when the Saviour was crucified and buried. How sad they must have been when they met on the "first day of the week" in the evening. Mary and the other women had seen the Saviour and told the disciples so, but they could not believe that he had risen from the dead. They must be mistaken, they thought. Thomas felt so sure that all was over, and that he should never see Christ any more, that he did not come to this meeting at all. By not coming he missed a great deal. He missed seeing the Saviour, who came when the doors were shut—missed hearing him say: "Peace be unto you!"

Did not see the print of the nails, nor the wound in his side, which Christ showed unto the rest of them. He did not receive then the invitation to put his hands upon him, as the rest did, to see that he was not a spirit as they thought, but had flesh and bones. Then Christ ate some fish and a piece of honey, and he told the disciples to go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Does that give *you* anything to do? Christ breathed on them also, and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost!" and the disciples were glad. But Thomas was not there, so his heart was not made joyful. Christ once promised that he would *always* be where two or three are gathered together in his name. A prayer-meeting is such a gathering. If you are not there what do you think *you* will miss?

2.—Thomas was told what happened. Don't you think he was glad then? Well, he was not. He said he couldn't believe that such a thing could have taken place. Could any other one than Christ come out of the grave? No such thing had ever been heard of, and so he could not think but that the disciples had been deceived. So he said he would not believe unless he could put his finger into the holes made by the nails, and thrust his hand into the wound made by the spear in his side. Just a week from the time the Saviour appeared to the others he came again and Thomas was there. He went right over to Thomas and told him to reach out his finger and put it into the print made by the nails, and thrust his hand into his wounded side, and become not faithless, but believing. Did Thomas do it? Oh no! Seeing was enough, and when he beheld the Saviour he cried out: "My Lord, and my God!" Christ came to that meeting just on purpose that Thomas might see that he was his Lord and his God. How anxious Christ must have been over Thomas! How much he must have thought of him! How much he must have desired to hear him say that, that he come there purposely for it. How much he must wish that *you* would say the same in *your* heart!

MEMORY VERSE.

Our faith would take thee at thy word,
Not grieve thee, asking for a sign;
But humbly cry, "my Lord, my God!"
And hear thee whisper: "Thou art mine,"
So shall we be the bless'd among,
Till we with all the ransomed throng,
The full reward of faith receive;
Who having seen not, yet believe.

BLACKBOARD.

Christ Died and
ROSE FROM THE GRAVE
That we might say
"MY LORD AND MY GOD."

LESSON LI.—DEC. 19, 1875.—JESUS AND PETER.

SCRIPTURE.—John 21: 15-22. Commit 15-19; Primary Verse, 15.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my Lambs.

16 He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Lovest thou Me?"—John 21: 17.

TOPIC.—The Test of Love.

HOME READINGS.

M. Matt. 26: 14-35.....A Vainglorious Boast.
T. Matt. 26: 69-75.....The Three Denials.
W. John 21: 15-22.....The Three Tests.
Th. 1 Pet. 5: 1-11.....The Lesson Learned.
F. Ezek. 34: 1-16.....The Flock to be Fed.
S. Is. 40: 1-11.....Lambs to be Cared for.
S. 1 Cor. 3: 1-23.....The Reward of Labor.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

A MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT.—At the time of the appearance of Christ spoken of in this lesson, the disciples were — where? 1. Who of the disciples were there? 2. What were they doing? 3. How much did they catch? 4. What did Jesus ask them? Do you think that shows that he cares whether we have anything to eat or not? See what Matt. 6: 33 says about it. Did the disciples immediately know Christ? 4. Who first found out that it was he? 7. How did he know? 6. Who got to him first? 7.

A WONDERFUL MEAL.—Who built the fire and cooked the fish? 9. Did any one else furnish anything for that feast? 10. How many fishes had the disciples? What sort were they? What happened to the net? Was there any other instance like this? Luke 5: 1-7. What happened to the net then? Luke 5: 6. What was the matter with the disciples? 12. Who acted as waiter? 13. Was this like Christ? Phil. 2: 7; John 13: 4, 5.

THE TEST OF LOVE.—By what name did Christ call Peter? 15. By what name had he said he should be called? 1: 42. Why, then, did he not call him Cephas (or Peter)? Why did he ask him, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Matt. 26: 33. Did Peter say he did? What did Christ then tell him to do? Who are the "lambs"? How many times did he ask Peter if he loved him? 15, 16, 17. What did Jesus each time tell him to do? How did Peter feel about the question the last time? Why was he asked that *three* times? Matt. 26: 34.

THE TEST OF SERVICE.—What did Jesus tell Peter was to happen to him? 18. What did he refer to? 19. Read verse 18 again very carefully, and see if you can tell what sort of a death it meant. If you can't tell, be sure and ask your teacher. Look at 2 Pet. 1: 14, and see if Peter remembered this? Read Matt. 19: 28, and see what is meant by Christ's command to Peter: "Follow me."

THE TEST OF REBUKE.—When Peter learned what was to happen to him, then what did he want to know? 20, 21. What reply did he get? Was it deserved? What lesson is there in that for us? What saying did it give rise to? 23. Was that right?

LESSON OUTLINE.

THE WORK OF THE DISCIPLES.

"*Feed my Lambs*"—"*Feed my Sheep.*"

THE WORK.

ITS DEMAND:

"Harvest is plenteous—laborers few." Matt. 9: 37.
"Went out early—to hire laborers." Matt. 20: 1.
"Go work to-day in my vineyard." Matt. 21: 28.
"Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Matt. 20: 6.

ITS SCOPE:

"Preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16: 15.
"Unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1: 8.
"The field is the world." Matt. 13: 38:
"Unto the ends of the world." Rom. 10: 18.

ITS NATURE:

a.) Following Christ:

"Follow me." John 21: 19.
"Followers of God as dear children." Eph. 5: 1.
"Walk in love as Christ also hath." Eph. 5: 2.
"As I have loved you—love one another." John 13: 34.

b.) Testify of Christ:

"We have seen, and do testify." 1 John 4: 14.
"And we are his witnesses." Acts 5: 32.
"Preach the word—reprove, rebuke, exhort." 2 Tim. 4: 2.

c.) Suffer for Christ:

"He that taketh not his cross." Matt. 10: 38.
"Let him deny himself." Matt. 16: 24.
"I am now ready to be offered." 2 Tim. 4: 6.
"I count not my life dear." Acts 20: 24.

d.) Toward Sinners:

"Preach the gospel." Mark 16: 15.
"Use great plainness of speech." 2 Cor. 3: 12.
"Reprove, rebuke, exhort." 2 Tim. 4: 2.
"Affectionately desirous." 1 Thess. 2: 8.

e.) Toward Brethren:

"Admonish one another." Rom. 15: 14.
"Feed my lambs—my sheep." John 21: 16, 17.
"Feed the church of God." Acts 20: 28.
"Provoke unto love and good works." Heb. 10: 24.
"Comfort one another." 1 Thess. 4: 18.
"Warn them that are unruly." 1 Thess. 5: 14.
"Support the weak." 1 Thess. 5: 14.

THE LABORERS.

1.—THEIR CAPABILITIES:

"Unto one five talents, another two," etc. Matt. 25: 15.
"Dividing unto every man severally." 1 Cor. 12: 11.
"Having then gifts differing." Rom. 12: 6.
"Are all apostles—all prophets—teachers?" 1 Cor. 12: 29.

2.—THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES:

"Much is given, of him—much required." Luke 12: 48.
"As every man hath received—so minister." 1 Pet. 4: 10.
"Rich—be rich in good works." 1 Tim. 6: 17, 18.
"Put my money to the exchangers." Matt. 25: 27.

3.—THEIR CALLINGS:

Ministry, let us wait on our ministering." Rom. 12: 7.
"He that teacheth, on teaching." Rom. 12: 7.
"He that exhorteth—he that giveth." Rom. 12: 8.
"Apostles—prophets—teachers." 1 Cor. 12: 28.
"Not slothful in business." Rom. 12: 11.

THE REWARD.

1.—IS SURE:

"To him that soweth righteousness—sure reward." Prov. 11: 18.
"We shall reap if we faint not." Gal. 6: 9.
"Verily—he shall not lose his reward." Mark 9: 41.

2.—IS SATISFYING:

"We receive a full reward." 2 John 8.
"For great is your reward." Matt. 5: 12.
"I shall be satisfied." Ps. 17: 15.
"They shall be abundantly satisfied." Ps. 36: 8.

3.—WHAT IT IS:

a.) A Place:

"I go to prepare a place for you." John 14:2.
"God—hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:16.
"An house not made with hands." 2 Cor. 5:1.

b.) A Feast:

"Shall sit down with Abraham." Matt. 8:11.
"Behold, I have prepared my dinner." Matt. 22:4.
"Eat bread in the kingdom of God." Luke 14:15.
"Called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Rev. 19:9.
"That ye may eat and drink at my table." Luke 22:30.

c.) A Crown:

"Of righteousness." 2 Tim. 4:8.
"Of glory." 1 Pet. 5:4.
"Of life." Jas. 1:12.
"Incorruptible." 1 Cor. 9:25.

d.) A Scepter:

"If we suffer, we shall also reign." 2 Tim. 2:12.
"The saints shall judge the world." 1 Cor. 6:2.
"I grant to sit with me on my throne." Rev. 3:21.
"Where I am, there shall my servant be." John 12:26.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

THE CHAPTER.—Verses 30, 31 of the last chapter are so written as to suggest that the writer has come to the end of his labor. As if they were closing the record, they state the purpose for which all of the rest of the book was written. Here, then, would have been a good place to stop. Here, according to the almost universal belief of Biblical scholars, John did stop for awhile, and at some period very near the close of his life, added chapter twenty-one, as a sort of appendix to that which was already written. The fact that this is so evidently an addition, and, besides, contains in it some slight differences of style, has led a few to discredit it altogether as being a later interpolation. But the mere fact that it is an appendix ought not to condemn it, and the criticisms of style are too finical altogether. They refer only to some few rare and unimportant expressions, while the whole chapter very strongly bears the imprint of John. And then, the purpose of writing it is very evident. The motive first apparent, of course, would be that of setting forth that second remarkable draught of fishes, and the Lord's talk with Peter. But the last part of the chapter seems to afford the main reason. And that was to confute the story, then getting prevalent, that he was to live for ever. In order properly to refute that he had to tell all the facts as they were. And it is to this cause, probably, that we are indebted for one of the most remarkable and homiletically rich chapters of John's gospel.

A WONDERFUL DRAUGHT. — Two points of interest are connected with the miraculous draught of fishes recorded in the first eight verses. The first of these is the characteristic behavior of the two disciples, Peter and John. When the disciples cast their net on the right side of the ship, in obedience to what they regarded as the friendly suggestion of one upon the shore, and the result was that they were unable to draw it up into the ship again on account of the multitude of fishes it enclosed, it occurs to no one but John that so wonderful a result indicates something more than accurate knowledge of their fishing grounds on the part of the one who made the suggestion. While the others are engaged in tugging at the net, excited with their great catch and the feeling of that vast mass of moving, struggling life in its meshes, he is reasoning that so great a draught of fishes shows more than human knowledge of a fishing locality, and the very similar event which once before had happened to the disciples helps him, in all probability, to decide that the one upon the shore is no less a person than the Risen One. Love is the keener sighted. John saw the folded clothes and believed. Now he sees the fishes and believes. As *Gossner* makes him say to himself: "The Lord hath played us this loving trick. I know him—this is his way." He speaks confidently to Peter: "It is the Lord!" But if love is the keenest of sight and quickest of conception, zeal is the soonest to act. He plunged into the sea in order to get to his Master. The wonder is that

he stopped to gird his fisher's coat around him, for though it is said that he was "naked," it means nothing more than that he was stripped to the closely fitting loin-cloth, or, perhaps, only to the fisherman's shirt. It shows how he revered the Lord, that in his impatience to be with him, he yet stopped long enough to don his coat before his headlong plunge into the sea. The "loved disciple" saw the Saviour first—the zealous disciple was the first to be with him. Let us not enter into the useless discussion in this case as to whose action was the more praiseworthy.

The second point of interest is in the comparisons made between this miracle and the one given in Luke 5: 1-11, in the symbolical meanings which have been given to each. In the two occurrences Augustine has discovered rich allegorical contrasts. In the first miracle he sees the church at work, toiling all night and catching nothing, and, in despair, resting from their work. At the command of the Saviour again they launch out into the deep, and cast their nets—on no special side of the ship, it will be observed; for, if he had ordered them to cast upon the right side, then it would have signified that all the good only would be taken, or, if on the left, only the bad. As it was on neither side, but in front, both the bad and the good were caught. A great multitude was taken—but the net brake. Poor net. When the gospel net is torn by divisions, of course many will escape. Indefinite number—a great multitude—small and great—good and bad. The ships began to sink. So the church is in danger of sinking from being weighted down with worthless professors. The good and the bad are in it together. In the first miracle we have the picture of the church as it now is. In the second, which took place after the resurrection, we have a representation of the church as it shall be. In this one the net is thrown only on the right side of the ship. Only the good are to be taken. The church no more is to be endangered by graceless members. The net does not break. All of the divisions that now impair its usefulness shall be mended. There is a definite number—showing that God chooses his people. The fishes are all "great"—as will be all of those who come into his kingdom. They are not able to draw it up into the ship—for the "fullness of the Gentiles" will come in. The fishes were not then taken up into the ship. There will not then be a strife just to get people into the church, but they will be taken directly to Christ himself first, and finally safely landed on the shores of eternity. But, however greater and more satisfactory will be the results of the efforts of the church in that future time, the same net will be used. It will then be free from all rents—profession and practice will then be firmly and consistently knit together—; it will be cast in a new direction, and in a more effective way, but it will be "the same old, old story" that will catch sinners then as it does now.

In addition to these evident deductions there are those who have tried to find a symbolical meaning for the number of fishes caught—153. Hengstenberg thinks he has found it in 2 Chron. 2: 17, where "the strangers" in Israel were numbered and reported to be "an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six-hundred"—"the strangers" corresponding to "the fullness of the Gentiles" brought in by the gospel net. Ammonius divides it into 100 — the Gentiles, 50 — the Jews, 3 — the Trinity. Jerome and Kostlin, on the false statement that Oppian had counted 153 species of fish, deduced therefrom the universality of the nations entering the net. But these are all far fetched, and well show the absurdities to which those will go who seek to find in every Scripture fact a type or symbol, and to see mountains of sense in every word of the text. Indeed, there are no reasons for supposing that any of the admirable comparisons and lessons which have been drawn from the two instances are authoritatively typical or symbolical. They are

forcible illustrations and happy comparisons, but we can not certainly say that they are anything more.

THE WONDERFUL MEAL.—It is not so said in so many words, but it seems to be left for us to infer that the fire which the disciples found on shore was not of man's making, and that the fish was miraculously procured and the bread miraculously furnished. But the miraculous nature of all these things dwells not upon the apostle's mind, and so he makes no mention of it. His attention is occupied with the gracious invitation: "Come and dine," and with the meal itself. Here, as of old time, Christ is the waiter, and gives his disciples the bread and the fish. Even after his resurrection he is still a servant. And yet, in spite of his condescension, so overawed were the disciples by his presence and the recent wonderful manifestation of his miraculous power, that, although knowing he was the Lord, they durst not ask him to confirm their knowledge with his own lips. They not only knew it, but had a very natural desire to hear him say so.

But if their large catch of fish was indicative of their future success as fishers of men, then this meal upon the shore has also a beautiful significance. If the one is representative of the labor of the disciples in the saving of men, the other is symbolical of the reward of their labor, when Christ shall meet them upon the shores of the other world, and "gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12:37). By referring to Matt. 8:11; 22:1–14; Luke 22:30; Rev. 7:17; 19:9, one will readily see how justifiable such an illustration would be.

THE TEST OF LOVE.—15–17. That conversation with Peter, short as it was, was a most terrible ordeal to that impulsively fickle, but warm-hearted disciple. Its very address sends a chill through him—"*Simon, son of Jonas.*" "He does not call me *Peter*," is his thought of anguish, "for I have forfeited that. Peter means a rock, but I have proved to be as unstable as sand. Therefore he calls me by that name no longer, but by my former name." *Lovest thou me more than these?* Alas, for Peter! How vividly that question brought up that vainglorious boast of his: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Matt. 26:33. In what abject humiliation must he have stood before the Saviour as this skillful question brought to his mind his former boastful self-reliance, and his disgraceful fall. How humble is his answer: *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* "Thou knowest"—in spite of that shameful denial—"that I love thee"—but he does not say "more than these." Peter is a braggart no longer—could not be with the memory of that time active and the Saviour before him. *Feed my lambs.* This is not a challenge to show his love by his works so much as it is a gracious restoration to his former official functions. Peter might well have expected, from the way he was addressed and the question he was asked, that he was to be removed altogether. Possibly, and, even probably, he did expect it, but lo! here is an assurance that he is still to continue in the service of his Lord. And if he only rightly construed it, that was the dearest and most sacred charge he could have given him. His manner and words were severe, but what tenderer trust could he have given unto him! Twice more is the question asked: "Lovest thou me"—three times in all. There were three denials—three opportunities to wipe them out. Each time it was prefaced with the address, "Simon, son of Jonas," as if Peter's assertion of love obtained no credence whatever. His heart, too, is touched to the quick in the form of the question. The Greek language has two forms of the verb "love"—*agapan* and *philein*. The first expresses a reverential love, the latter a close personal love—to love dearly. Christ, in the first two questions uses the former, while Peter invariably replies with the latter. His warm heart is not

content to use the colder word, and is fretted because Jesus uses it. But, the third time Christ adopts his own stronger expression, and asks: "Lovest thou me dearly?" and then the sorely tried heart, probed now to the very core, cries out: "*Lord, thou knowest all things; thou* KNOWEST *that I love thee!*" Peter denied the Lord three times, but three times was he most sorely tried; he fell, but most bitterly he repented.

The two last commands need a new interpretation. The first is right just as it is; the second should read: "Tend (that is, act as shepherd to) my sheep," and the third should be: "Feed my little sheep." If we take it literally—and we do not see why we should not—the church is commanded to take more care of her lambs and her little sheep than she does. Certainly we would rather so interpret it, considering the importance of the early care of the child, than to render the first as meaning "Feed those that are newly converted"—of whatever age they may be; the second as, "shepherd my sheep," and the third as: "Feed my beloved sheep." If we accept this rendering, we have to give an interpretation to each beyond the obvious one, until we finally come to a class that are the specially beloved of the Lord. Taking them in their most apparent signification, and changing the order a little, and we have a consistent meaning and a progression of thought: "Feed my lambs"—*children;* "Feed my little sheep"—*youth;* "Shepherd my sheep"—*adults.* And that expresses the relative care that each class needs. The lambs and the little sheep need to be fed, whereas the sheep need only to be led into the green pastures and beside the still waters.

Lovest thou me? It was not until Peter answered that, saying: "Yea, Lord, thou *knowest* that I love thee," that he gave him anything to do for any part of his flock. Love makes the true shepherd. And every one, whether he would be a pastor or a teacher of a class in the Sabbath-school, should first be able to answer that question as Peter answered it before he feels that Christ has given him the privilege of feeding either the sheep or the lambs. It looks as if this passage settles that question often discussed in Sunday-school conventions: "Should an unconverted person teach in the Sabbath-school?"

THE TEST OF SERVICE.—18, 19. But Peter's trial was not yet entirely over. Jesus tells him that there is before him a martyr's death. Does he tell him what that death is to be? Some so think. The "stretching forth" of the hands they regard as plainly indicative of the nailing of them on the cross, and the "girding" as a sign of his being bound upon it. Certainly it seems as plain as the prophecy of Christ concerning his own death when he spoke of it as being "lifted up," merely. 12:32. But whether or not this imagery was sufficiently plain, Christ before this had given him hints sufficient for him to interpret it. He closes by saying: "Follow me," and he had told his disciples: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." When Peter would have him plainly tell "whither" he was to go when he mysteriously referred to his crucifixion, he significantly answers *him:* "Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards." From these facts and the references that he makes to it himself in 1 Pet. 4:16; 2 Pet. 1:14, we may infer that Peter fully understood the manner of his coming death. It was much more difficult for Peter, as for many disciples now, to do than to suffer. If, when he struck off the servant's ear, he could have continued as energetically as he had begun, he would, no doubt, have bravely fought and died for his Lord. He could have heroically acted, but the test of passive endurance was then too much for him, and hence his three denials. But patient suffering is a higher attainment than active doing, and this lesson was to be learned by him. *Girdedst thyself*—for diligent service for me. As he had well

stood the test of love, so did he stand this also, for there is no word of remonstrance from him.

THE TEST OF REBUKE.—20–22. And yet there is not just the right sort of a spirit in Peter yet; for his question about John: "Lord, and what shall this man do?" clearly implies his thought, "Well, am I to suffer alone?" It is the very echo of Martha's peevish complaint: "Lord, carest thou not that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" Luke 10: 40. And the rebuke in each case was prompt. In this it was: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." It is a rebuke that we all have often needed. Christianity has been very much retarded because its disciples too frequently ask: "What shall this man do?" instead of each desiring to know: "Lord, what shall *I* do?" And the question is often asked when one's own duty, like that of Peter's, is perfectly plain. If every one in the church would not so much mind the shortcomings of his neighbor as his own—if we would all hear, apply, and obey the pointed reproach and command, "What is that to thee—follow THOU me," how largely would her effective force be increased!

Tarry till I come. There are several interpretations of this, two of which seem to be the most accepted. 1st.—Till the destruction of Jerusalem. 2d.—The coming of Jesus at the natural, unhastened death of John, to take him to himself. John himself denies that it is that which is known as "the second coming of Christ," and it is impossible undoubtingly to decide in favor of either of the other two.

Scintillations.

1.—There is nothing lost, but everything gained, by obeying Christ's orders. If we have toiled all night and caught nothing, his command once again to let down the net is a promise of success. "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Gal. 6:9; 1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 10:38; Jas. 5:7, 8; Ps. 126:6.

2.—How often is Christ near when we do not expect him, and even are not looking for him—"a very present help in time of trouble." Deut. 4:7; Ps. 46:1; 62:7, 8; Eph. 2:13.

3.—Frequently, it may be, we do not catch anything, because we depend altogether on ourselves; and frequently, also, perhaps, that we may be tried in our purpose and our faith. 1 Cor. 3:6; 2 Cor. 3:5; Ps. 66:10; Rom. 2:7; Jas. 1:3, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 4:12; Rev. 3:10.

4.—Blessed are we when in reply to the question "*Lovest thou me?*" we can sincerely reply: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou *knowest* I love thee." Perfect love casteth out fear. Rom. 5:5; 8:15; Phil. 2:16–18; 2 Tim. 1:7; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 2:28; 3:21; 4:16, 17.

5.—It takes a higher courage to suffer than to dare. It marks a truer devotion patiently and unmurmuringly to submit to afflictions than to be active in God's service. And yet we are told to rejoice in temptations for the trying of our faith worketh patience, and patience shall make us perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Matt. 5:11, 12; Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:12; Jas. 1:2, 12; 1 Pet. 2:19, 20; 4:13; 5:10.

HYMN.

First among the Christian graces,
  Love, the crowning virtue, stands;
Love is taught our highest duty,
  In the Saviour's two commands;
Love with all the powers united,
  Love the Lord thy God above,
And remember yet another,
  As thyself thy neighbor love.

BLACKBOARD.

The Great Question,

"LOVEST THOU ME?"

The Acceptable Answer:

"Yea, Lord, THOU KNOWEST That I Love Thee."

THE PRIMARY CLASS.

1.—Seven of the disciples are once more fishing on the sea of Tiberias. (Tell who they were, fixing their names and identity in the memory of the class by some prominent incident in the lives of each, *e. g.:* Peter was the one who denied his Lord three times; Thomas was the one who doubted; Nathanael was the one of whom Christ said: "Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile," etc.) They had toiled all night and caught nothing. Once before they had done the same

thing. And then the Saviour came and told Simon Peter to go out once more and let down the nets and they caught so many that when they put the fishes in the two ships the ships began to sink. Perhaps they thought of that time, and wished he would come again. But the Saviour was risen from the dead now, and they could not expect that he would come again to help them. But some one did come. He stood on the shore and asked them: "Children, have ye any meat?" Whom do you think it was? It was Christ, but *they* did not know him. What was it he asked them? Does that show whether he cares whether we have anything to eat or not? (Read portions of, and comment on Matt. 6:25-34.) He told them to cast their net on the right side of the ship. They could not draw it up into the ship again on account of the multitude of fishes in it. There were 153 great big ones.

2.—*The Meal.* How was the fire built? Who cooked the fish? Who furnished the bread? Who waited on the disciples? When we get through working for Jesus in this world—the feast that awaits us in the other! Whom will we sit down with, and who will come forth and serve us?

3.—*The Test of Peter.* Three tests, because he had denied Christ three times. *Lovest thou me?* That was the question he asked. Why? Because he was going to give the little lambs and the sheep into his care, and he wanted to be sure first that he loved him enough to love them. He carried the lambs in his bosom, and he wanted Peter to do the same. Who are the lambs? The sheep? What was Peter's reply? "Lord, thou *knowest* that I love thee." Can you say that? How are you to know whether you do or not?

4.—*Peter's Death.* How foretold—how shown in the 18th verse—Peter's petulant reply—his rebuke: "What is that to thee? Follow *thou* me." Little ones never should say, "I will follow Christ if somebody else will." Every one must do that for himself. We should follow him if *no one* else will.

MEMORY VERSE.

I'll gladly tread that narrow path
While light and grace are given;
Who meekly follow Christ on earth
Shall reign with him in heaven.

BLACKBOARD.

Follow THOU Me.

LESSONS FOR FOURTH QUARTER.

Oct.	3	Jesus Lifted Up,	John 12: 23-33	Nov.	14	Jesus Interceding,	John 17: 15-21
"	10	Washing the Disciples' Feet,	John 13: 1- 9	"	21	Jesus the King,	John 18: 33-38
				"	28	Jesus on the Cross,	John 19: 25-30
"	17	Many Mansions,	John 14: 1- 7	Dec.	5	Jesus and Mary,	John 20: 11-18
"	24	The Vine and the Branches,	John 15: 1- 8	"	12	Jesus and Thomas,	John 20: 24-31
				"	19	Jesus and Peter,	John 21: 15-22
"	31	Friends and Foes of Jesus	John 15: 11-19	"	26	*Review.*—The Ministry of Jesus.	
Nov.	7	The Work of the Spirit,	John 16: 7-14				

LESSON LII.—DEC. 26, 1875.—REVIEW.—THE MINISTRY OF JESUS.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name."—JOHN 20:31.

TOPIC.—TWELVE REASONS FOR OUR FAITH.

HOME READINGS.

M.	12: 23-33..Jesus Lifted Up.	Th.	17: 15-21..Jesus Interceding.
	13: 1- 9..Washing the Disciples' Feet.		18: 33-38..Jesus the King.
T.	14: 1- 7. Many Mansions.		19: 25-30..Jesus on the Cross.
	15: 1- 8..The Vine and Branches.	F.	20: 11-18..Jesus and Mary.
W.	15: 11-19..Friends and Foes of Jesus.	S.	20: 24-31. Jesus and Thomas.
	16: 7-14..The Work of the Spirit.	S.	21: 15-22..Jesus and Peter.

SCHOLARS' QUESTION HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS.

FOUR FRUIT REASONS.—What is the topic? The "twelve reasons" for our faith are the twelve lessons for the quarter we have just studied. The first reason for our faith we find in the first lesson in John 12:24, 32—what is it? What reason do verses 28-30 give us that Jesus was the Son of God? In the second lesson how is the same thing proved, in 13:3? What lesson did Christ teach the disciples by washing their feet? Who did not want his feet washed? 13:8. Why did he finally let

Jesus wash them? How many reasons can you find in John 14: 1-7 why Christ is divine? See if there is one or more than one in each of the verses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7. How many in 15: 1-8? What ones are there in verses 1, 3, 7? What is Christ called in them? What are we? What is expected of us?

FOUR HEART REASONS.—How did Christ show his love for us? 15: 13. What joy did he promise? 11. What does he expect of us? 12. How does verse 16 prove his divinity? What are we to expect from the world if we are his disciple? 18, 19. In 16: 7-14, what in the 8th and 9th and last two verses was to show that he was the Son of God? *How* was the Spirit to do it? What is there in verses 16, 18, 21, of chapter 17 that shows Christ's divinity? What did he want us to be kept from? 15, 16. What did he want us to be? 17, 19, 21. How, again, is his divinity shown in verses 36, 37 of chapter 18? What sort of a kingdom did he have? 36. What sort of subjects?

FOUR MIRACLE REASONS.—In verse 28 of the 19th chapter what proves that Jesus was the Christ? What did he do for his mother when he was on the cross? 26, 27. Can you mention any other things he did for any one else? What in 20: 11-18 proves that Jesus was divine? What in verse 17 proves that he is our brother, and God our Father? What did Mary at first suppose him to be? How did she come to know who it was? How was his divinity proved in verses 24-31 of the same chapter? What did Thomas say he was? Which did Jesus think was best — faith or sight? What in the 21st chapter proves the divinity of Christ? How did he try Peter? What did he tell him to do? What did he tell him would happen to him? 18, 19. What was his last command to him? 22. Does he say that to anybody else?

HINTS FOR REVIEW.

A friend of ours on last Review day followed, essentially, the plan of THE TEACHER, but, in addition to that, selected three speakers who took up the topics associated with the three divisions, after the Review was completed. Some such course will be advisable with this. Call out the titles of the lessons, as before, from the whole school, and put them upon the board. Assign one lesson to a class. If there are not twelve classes, give some of the classes two; and if there are more than twelve, divide them. Call on the classes for the "Titles, Texts, Topics, and Facts;" and on the teachers for the "Teachings."

The Topic for the day covering all the lessons for the quarter, it will be noticed, is: "*Twelve reasons for our faith.*" The first division is called "*Four Fruit Reasons*," and the aptness of the title is reflected in the Scripture quotation: "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit." The first of these reasons for our faith is that that has taken place which, in speaking of himself as a corn of wheat, he said would come to pass: "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." It *has* brought forth much fruit and so that is one good "fruit-reason" for our faith. The next is that the religion he taught and the example he gave make us bear the fruit of humility. And nothing else does or will. Hence that is another good "fruit-reason." Another good reason is that when we believe in God and in Christ our hearts are no longer "troubled." In his house are many mansions where sorrow does not come. Joy is a good fruit. And the lesson of the Vine and the Branches teaches us that we can have *no* fruit unless we abide in him. "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" And that is one of the best of fruit-reasons for believing in him.

The four heart-reasons are: 1st.—Joy in the heart (15: 11); 2d.—The Spirit's presence in the heart (16: 7); 3d.—That we are kept, sanctified, and made one of heart with the brethren, by the Father (17: 12-21); 4.—His kingdom within us—we "hear" his voice. The last four are called "miracle-reasons," because the last three are miraculous appearances, well attested, and the first more miraculous than either of them, both in his behavior on the cross and the signs and wonders that took place at his death. The speakers who take up these three divisions should aim specially to show how each one sets forth and proves the divinity of Christ.

This being the last review day for the year, the day should be devoted to it, and all the lessons for the year should be made to pass under review. To do this

REVIEW CHART.—THE MINISTRY OF JESUS.

"By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—ROM. 5: 19.

LESSONS.			FACTS.				APPLICATIONS.			
	NO.	TITLE.	WHEN.	WHERE.	WHO.	WHAT.	TOPICS.	TEXTS.	TEACHINGS.	
FOUR FRUIT REASONS.	XL.	J. U.	Near Crucifixion	Jerusalem.	Greeks, disciples, Jesus.	Hour come .. corn of wheat .. lifted up .. voice from heaven.	Life from—	"And I, if I be"—	He that loveth his life shall lose it. If any man serve—Father will honor.	GOOD TREE—GOOD FRUIT.
	XLI.	W. F.	Feast of Pass.	" Upper room	Jesus, dis.	Jesus girdeth himself .. washing disciples' feet .. Peter's objection .. Peter's wish.	Hum—	"Let this mind"—	"Ye ought also to wash one another's feet."	
	XLII.	M. M.	"	"	"	Many mansions .. place prepared .. come again .. the Way, the Truth, the Life.	Heaven is—	"But now they"—	"Let not your heart be troubled." Christ the only way to heaven.	
	XLIII.	V. B.	"	Jer.	"	Vine .. branches .. fruit .. fruit-bearing .. withered branches.	Fruit—	"By their fruits"—	Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.	
FOUR HEART REASONS.	XLIV.	F. F.	Near Crucifixion	"	"	Christ's joy in us .. love one another .. not servants .. world's hate.	The love of—	"Whosoever therefore"	Love ye one another. Be not conformed to this world.	FAITH IS OF THE HEART.
	XLV.	W. S.	"	"	"	Christ to go away .. Comforter to come .. office of the Comforter.	Power of—	"He shall"—	Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth—teach us about Christ. Pray for his presence.	
	XLVI.	J. I.	"	"	"	Christ prays for his disciples .. that they be kept from evil .. sanctified .. sent .. one.	Sanct—	"He ever liveth"—	We are not of the world—should be holy—united.	
	XLVII.	J. K.	"	Judgment Hall.	Jesus. Pilate.	Jesus before Pilate .. art thou a king? .. nature of his kingdom .. Pilate's verdict.	Christ's K—	"He is Lord"—	"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."	
FOUR MIRACLE REASONS.	XLVIII.	J. C.	During Crucifixion	Before the Cross.	Jes. his Moth two Marys, John.	Woman, behold thy Son .. "I thirst" .. vinegar .. "It is finished."	Christ lifted—	"The Lord hath laid"	"Truly this was the Son of God."	MIRACLES, AIDS TO FAITH.
	XLIX.	J. M.	After Resur.	Before the Sepul.	Jesus. Mary. Angels.	Mary weeping .. two angels .. Jesus mistaken for gardener .. Touch me not.	The Saviour—	"Now when Jesus"—	Jesus is near to those who seek him.	
	L.	J. T.	"	Room—doors shut.	Jesus—dis.	Thomas doubts .. Jesus appears .. "Reach hither thy fingers," etc.	The blessedness of—	"Believe in the"—	"Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.	
	LI.	J. P.	"	Sea of Ti—	Jesus—seven dis.	The wonderful catch of fishes .. the meal .. the test of Peter .. Peter's rebuke.	The test of—	"Lovest"—	Care for the flock .. follow Christ.	

"Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."—REV. 5: 9.

is too much for one session. Therefore let the usual hour be taken up with the review for the last quarter, and an extra session be held in the evening for the preceding lessons of the year. If three persons are appointed, each briefly to catechise the school on the lessons for the first three quarters of the year, and then sum up in a very few remarks, it will give time, besides, for some thoughts, warm and glowing, appropriate to Christmas and the end of the year. The central thoughts of the lessons for the four divisions of the year, as they seem to us, are: 1.—Christ our Leader; 2.—Christ our King; 3.—Christ our Teacher. 4.—Christ our Sacrifice. Around these topics should all the remarks concentrate, and the motto for the evening and the year should be: "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*"

REVIEW EXERCISE.

Four Fruit Reasons.

Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit.

Scripture.—Gal. 3:13-26.

Hymn.—"I gave my life for thee."

TITLES.—What lesson was a prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion?

"Jesus lifted up."

What verses in the second lesson give to it its title?

13:5, 6. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Why was the third lesson called: "Many Mansions"?

14:2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Why was the fourth called: "The Vine and the Branches"?

15:5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

TOPICS.—The seed dies and Christ dies—but both spring up and bear much fruit. What do we learn from that?

That there is "Life from death."

When Christ washed the disciples' feet what did he want to teach them?

"Humility."

When Christ told his disciples he was going to prepare a place for them among the "many mansions," how did he want them and us to look upon heaven?

"Heaven is our home."

How is it to be known that we are true branches of Christ, the Vine?

By "Fruit-bearing."

TEXTS.—What text shows the power of a crucified Saviour?

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

What one would lead us even to wash the feet of our brethren, if need be?

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

What one teaches that all the disciples of Christ expect better times?

"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."

How is one to know a Christian?

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

FACTS.—How did Christ show that his death would really be productive of life?

12:24, 32. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

What is there that shows that an angel's voice is like thunder?

28, 29. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An angel spake to him.

What is there in the second lesson that proves that Jesus was faithful to us?

13:1. Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

What part did the devil have in the betrayal of Christ?

2. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him.

In what way did the Saviour take upon himself the duties of a servant?

4, 5. He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Why did he do such a lowly thing?

Luke 22:24. And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

Who did not want Jesus to wash his feet?

8. Peter saith unto him, thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

When he found that he would have no part with Christ unless they were washed, then what did he want?

9. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

What verse is meant to show that we need every day to be cleansed from our daily sins?

10. Jesus saith unto him, he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

What shows that a great many people are expected to live in heaven?

14: 2. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Is there a welcome for each one that will go there?

3. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also.

How shall we find our way there?

6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

What sort of a vine is Christ?

15: 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

How shall we, who are the branches, know whether we "abide" in him?

5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

If we bear a little fruit, is that enough?

2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

What happens to those branches that do not abide in him?

6. If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

TEACHINGS.—What is there in the first lesson to show that it is not best to be selfish?

12: 25. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

What proves that it is better to serve than be served?

26. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor.

In what way is the world to be converted?

32. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

What lesson did the Saviour mean us to learn when he washed the feet of the disciples?

13: 13, 14. Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am.

If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

How will it make us feel if we stoop to do such things?

17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

What is the cure of all trouble?

14: 1. Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.

How shall we be able to know God?

7. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

Where will we have to stop in asking God for the things we desire?

15: 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

If we bear much fruit, who gets the credit of it?

8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Four Heart Reasons.

"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness."

Scripture.—Rom. 10: 1-11.

Hymn.—"I am coming to the cross."

TITLES.—How do we know that we are either among the "friends" or the "foes" of Jesus?

Matt. 12: 30. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

What verse tells what the work of the Spirit is?

John 16: 8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

Why was the seventh lesson called "Jesus Interceding"?

17: 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

What royal title does the eighth lesson give to the Saviour?

18: 33. Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

TOPICS.—What helps us to be Christ's friends?

"The love of Christ."

What topic shows us the power we most should covet?

"Power of the Holy Ghost."

Christ intercedes for us that we may attain what?

"Sanctification."

What topic indicates Christ's right to rule?

"Christ's Kingdom."

TEXTS.—What text divides the world into two classes?

"Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

What one shows that the Holy Spirit is our instructor?

"He shall teach you all things."

What one tells us that Jesus is even now praying for us?

"He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Which one points out the fact that every king is a subject?

"He is Lord of lords, and King of kings."

FACTS.—What precept did Christ think so much of that he called it "my commandment"?

15: 12. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

How did he decide as to who are his friends?

14. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.

How did he decide as to who are his enemies?

18. If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you.

How was it that he came to call his disciples his "friends"?

15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Why was it best for the disciples that Jesus should go away?

16: 7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not

away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you.

What was the Comforter to do?

8–11. And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Of sin, because they believe not on me;

Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

What was he to teach?

13, 14. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.

He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

What did Christ pray that we should be kept from?

17:15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

How did he say we were to be made holy?

17, 19. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Did he ever pray for *us?*

20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

What made Pilate think Christ had a queer kingdom?

18:36. Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.

What shows that he is King of all of those who love the truth?

37. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king, then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

What did Pilate think of him?

38. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

TEACHINGS.—For what purpose had Jesus told about the many mansions, the coming of the Comforter, and the bearing of fruit?

15:11. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

Why has he chosen us to be his disciples?

16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

If the world loves us are we to rejoice?

19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

How will the Holy Spirit teach us?

Eph. 1:17, 18. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

Col. 1:9. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Why did Christ pray that we might be kept from evil and be made holy?

17:18. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Why did he wish us all to love each other?

21. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

What sort of weapons are used in Christ's kingdom?

2 Cor. 10:4. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

Why do all people not obey his voice?

10:26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

Four Miracle Reasons.

"*A man approved of God among you by miracles.*"

Scripture.—John 9:1–16.

Hymn.—"Jesus is all in all to me."

TITLES.—What lesson tells of Jesus dying, yet triumphant?

"Jesus on the Cross."

What one suggests a comforted mourner?

"Jesus and Mary."

What one a doubter convinced?

"Jesus and Thomas."

What one a disciple reproved?

"Jesus and Peter."

TOPICS.—What topic shows that a prophecy was fulfilled?

"Christ Lifted Up."

Which one caused great excitement among the disciples?

"The Saviour Risen."

Which expresses the joy that the believer feels?

"The Blessedness of Faith."

Which one tells of the trial of Peter?

"The Test of Love."

TEXTS.—What text ought both to make us weep and rejoice?

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Which one tells who first saw the Saviour after his resurrection?

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene."

What one shows how a doubter can be cured?

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established."

Which one is a question which God has asked of every one that ever lived?

"Lovest thou me?"

FACTS.—Who stood just before the cross?

19:25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

What did Christ say to two persons very dear to him?

26, 27. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.

Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

What two cries did he utter?

28, 30. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

Whom did Mary see in the sepulcher?

20: 12. And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

Why did she weep?

13. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

What proof have we that Christ, after he was risen, looked like a servant?

15. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

What made her finally recognize him?

16. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

What endearing title did he call the disciples in the message he sent to them?

17. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God.

What shows that Thomas believed that his faith was all at the ends of his fingers?

25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

What shows that he found he was mistaken?

26, 28. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

Do we know all the miracles that Christ did?

30. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

Peter denied the Lord three times and was tested three times. What were the tests?

21: 15-17. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

What was to happen to Peter when he was old?

18, 19. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this he saith unto him, Follow me.

What unfortunate question did Peter ask?

20, 21. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

TEACHINGS.—What did the centurion learn at the cross?

Matt. 27: 54. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

What did Christ do on the cross?

John 17: 4. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

What shows that Jesus may be near by when we are seeking him, and we not know it?

20: 14. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

What indicates that we ought to testify that we have seen the Lord before we deliver his message?

18. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

What shows that we are better off than those who actually associated with Jesus?

29. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

What shows that Peter's question was wrong, and points out what each one of us should do?

21: 22. Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

EDITORIAL MISCELLANY

AGAIN we present our readers with a Review Exercise, and, as before, the publishers print it as an extra on a four-page sheet at the rate of $1.00 per 100 copies. So satisfactory was the last that orders for the present one were registered even before it was written! We hope that all who wish them will order them so early that *this* time no one will be disappointed. Orders for the last still

kept coming in long after review day. That would have made of it a review indeed!

How appropriate are the lessons for the month to the end of the year! The last lesson of the year falls on the day after Christmas. On one day the children all over the land are happy in celebrating the wonderful birth of Christ. On the next they come together to hear about his still more wonderful resurrrection. If the one day is a happy one, much more should the other be. On the one angels brought the joyful message, "On earth peace, good will toward men;" but on the other the teachers are intrusted with the still more joyful tidings: "*He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" Theirs was the announcement of a Saviour born — ours is the assurance of a Saviour risen. Certainly teachers ought not to miss improving the vantage ground that they this year have in converting the rejoicing of Christmas into the holier joy of the Resurrection.

But the pertinency of the lessons do not end with that. The last one, especially, comes as a message of encouragement to teachers. Counting up the small results of a year of work, there are doubtless many who feel like giving up. How timely for such is this last lesson that tells how the disciples toiled all night and caught nothing, and yet when they, under the direction of the Master, let down their net again on the *right* side of the ship, they caught so many that they could not draw it in again, but were compelled just to take them to Christ himself. And if any one has cause to reproach himself with unfaithfulness during the year, how opportune is this lesson on Jesus and Peter! To all such comes the all-important, thrice-repeated question: "*Lovest thou me?*" and, if we still can say, as Peter did, "*Lord, thou knowest that I love thee,*" once more does he give us the tender injunction: "*Feed my lambs!*" Blessed words to carry into the New Year from the Old! As a sacred legacy from 1875 they shall be the motto for 1876. This command shall be our inspiration to labor, and the miraculous draught of fishes the promise of our sure reward.

It is through the untiring and persistent efforts of its zealous and efficient Secretary, Mr. Fred Hawes, we have no doubt, that the St. Louis Sabbath School Association has at last obtained such a thorough knowledge of its field of work, and been enabled to lay before its friends a city statistical report that is a model for completeness and accuracy. But, so far, statistics have been wofully humiliating. They have remorelessly shrunk our conception of what the Sabbath-school actually has accomplished — a conception swelled into balloon exaggeration by the enthusiasm of Sunday-school gatherings and the large numbers that turn out to attend them. And here, again, a larger rent than ever is made for the escape of those inflated notions. From this report it appears that the total attendance of Sunday-school scholars in that city, including the adults of the Bible classes, is only 19,677, whereas the estimated number of children of school age is 140,000. Here is the fearful discrepancy of over 120,000 children not in the Sunday-school in the single city of St. Louis! The number of children there that attend the public schools is set down at 33,511, and those who go to Catholic schools at 21,789; so that the Sunday-schools are not reaching one-half so many as do the schools of the city. Undoubtedly St. Louis, according to the table summary which accompanies the report, is far behind her sister cities, but if other places, before they become too much horrified over that city, will investigate their own borders as thoroughly as she has done, they will find in the results humiliation enough to bring them at least pretty near down to her level. The encouraging feature about St. Louis is that she has exposed her malady, and now there is some hope

of curing it. Other cities may have the same disease without being aware of it.

BUT what a loud call are these statistics to the several denominations that are occupying, or, rather, *un*-occupying the field. Out of those 140,000 children the Presbyterians have secured only 4,917, the Baptists only 3,670, the Methodists of the two branches, North and South, together have only 3,108, the Protestant Episcopal 2,048, the Congregationalists only 789, and other denominations divide the remainder in very small numbers between them. Evidently the coming Church of the Future in St. Louis is the one which will devote all its energies toward securing these neglected children. If there is any one of the denominations that has foresight enough to see that it can better afford to neglect the present generation than this coming one, it will lay the foundation of a wonderful future growth. That to be sure is not the highest incentive that might be used when we have the saving of souls under consideration, but with many it is the most effective one.

RECENTLY Mr. Spurgeon gave a very interesting account of the steps by which he ascended to his present pulpit. He commenced when he was about sixteen years old, right after his conversion, to distribute tracts, and, by persevering in his labors within a certain district, came to have a sort of diocese in which he was a familiar and welcome fact. Having much to do with the people, the next step naturally was to teach their children; and so it was but a short time before he was in the Sunday-school. In the Sabbath-school he made several addresses to the children which were liked so well that it was arranged that he should speak to them every Sunday. It has always been found that a table can not be spread for the children unless the old folks will soon come to see if they can not also partake of the feast. So it was in this case. The adults kept dropping in, until, before long, the youngster had more people to hear him in the afternoon than the minister had in the morning. The rest can easily be imagined.

The special points to be noticed in this succinct autobiography are: 1.—He commenced to work immediately after he became a convert. Those professors of religion rarely amount to anything who do not, like him, instantly go to work for the Master. 2.—His growth. He did not all at once fly up to a pulpit rostrum. He climbed up. He was gradually fitted for it by his Sunday-school work. That was his theological seminary. 3.—He gathered his present large congregation by preaching to children. *Will* the clergy take the hint?

TEACHERS in the Sabbath-school might well take some hints from Mr. Moody. He preaches with a purpose. He does not do it merely to interest or instruct—but *to convert*. He would not preach at all, we may be sure, unless he did interest and instruct, but we may be equally certain that he would cease to preach if he did no more than this. His great aim is so to interest and instruct that his hearers shall decide for Christ. When a teacher spends all his time on that which will secure the attention and give instruction, he may find that, after all, he has accomplished nothing. He has taken the easily captured outworks, while the citadel remains untouched. The heart, and not the mind or the fancy, is the real object of attack.

THE Sabbath-school convention of Du Page County, in this State, unwittingly caught a prize. There was present at its sessions, unheralded and unannounced, *Tala Mas Mico*, whose English name is Rev. John Bemo, a native minister of the Seminole Indians. He was a quiet on-looker for a considerable portion of time, in the early part of the convention, but when it came to the discussion of "Teachers' Meetings" he could keep silence no longer. Then it transpired that he was the pastor

of a Sabbath-school that numbers some 700, many of whose pupils and teachers walk fifteen to twenty miles to be present, and think nothing of it. He holds a teachers' meeting every week, and keeps a faithful record of its attendance. If an absentee from that meeting should come to teach his class on Sabbath "he is quietly informed," said *Tala Mas Mico*, in broken English, "he can't teach that class, 'cause he hain't got nothin' to teach 'em with." That brought down the house, and *Tala Mas Mico* became immediately popular. Not a few thought that the white man could learn something from Indian tactics.

THE one who thus taught such a lesson in the management of teachers' meetings is a nephew of the celebrated chief, Osceola. His first acquaintance with his white brethren, as he himself incidentally remarked, was when he was chased by them with bloodhounds! Although he talks in slow, hesitating, and, frequently, ungrammatical English, yet he has mastered a considerable education, having begun a course of study in Philadelphia, and completed it at Princeton. By his efforts nearly twenty-seven hundred of his tribe, which, all told, numbers only four thousand, have been converted. But, if to the incident we have given, we should add any extended biographical notice, such as he deserves, we fear it would be the means of flooding him with invitations to be at Sunday-school conventions next year, so that then he would be no better off than a Sunday-school editor.

WE do not know but the programme makers of the session of the Cook County Sabbath School Association, held in this city Nov. 11–13, will effect a material change in the character of all similar conventions. They at least suggest some new possibilities in the way of attractions. Their order of exercises provided for a choir voluntary, cornet solo, hymns by choir, cornet, and congregation, and the leadership of the music was divided around, so as to make all the denominations happy! We would gently suggest the oversight of packing the programme so full as to leave no chance for an *encore*, and omitting to give the children any musical tid-bits whatever. As we write before the event, on account of the necessity of getting to our New Zealand and Australian subscribers in time, these little infelicities may yet be all duly arranged. But what may not be done in the direction thus merely pointed out! We trust that the executive officers of the various State Associations will see what a powerful attraction they can add to their conventions in securing the services of Levy, Arbuckle, Clara Louise Kellogg, Lucca, and Nilsson.

REALLY the *Sunday School Times* has put the editor of the *Interior* and ourselves in a very awkward position. It has complimented the sort of paragraphing done in the two journals in such a way that neither editor will henceforth dare to say anything that is commonplace, or write in ordinary prose. And, just think of always being expected to express one's self in lingual pyrotechnics—to furnish paragraphs as brilliant as a rocket, or that fizz and splutter with sparkles like a pin-wheel. In behalf of both we protest. Gray, we know, can't stand it, and there is nothing that we should regret more than to see our neighbor of the *Interior* break down under a heavy consciousness that too much was expected of him. For our own relief and for the sake of a reputation for weight and dignity which we can not otherwise acquire, we want, occasionally, the common and inalienable editorial privilege of being dull.

A writer in the *Christian Union* has made a criticism on Sunday-school singing that is thoroughly deserved. The substance of it is that most of the Sabbath-school choristers are never satisfied unless the children are singing at the top of their voices. But volume of sound is

not an essential, nor, frequently, a desirable thing. Taste, sentiment, worship are greatly more to be coveted. And yet one can hardly go into any children's gathering unless we see the leader of the singing vigorously stamping with foot, swinging his baton, and crying out: "*Louder!* children, LOUDER!" When he has worked himself into a perspiration, and a hurricane of sound, sufficient to sweep away all devotion, has rewarded his efforts, he is happy. If something does not intervene to counteract this training, what a stentorian, deafening race of singers the next generation will be!

IT certainly is one of the most encouraging features of our modern convention and institute work that so much is made of the Bible. Rarely can a programme now be found that has not in it one or more Bible readings or Bible lessons, while the tendency of discussion and of speech is to exalt the Scriptures higher and higher. As the result of all this, it is now no very uncommon thing for men to have a "Bible pocket," and to see them studying the next Sabbath's lesson on the cars or while waiting for trains. The increased demand for Bibles is taxing the full resources of those houses that issue the best editions. The Scriptures are coming to be a reverenced, loved, and familiar book. So long as the tendency sets in this direction we may well rejoice and take courage. We hope that the current may become so strong as to carry a few more copies into the pew than we now see there.

IN this, the closing number of the year, we desire, metaphorically, since we can not do so actually, to take each one of our friends by the hand and wish them a "Merry Christmas." We have labored together for another year—now let us rejoice together. In preparing the closing lessons for 1875 our own heart has been filled too full of the Christmas feeling to admit of any other sentiment than that of joy. It is a grand work to which we are called, with sure rewards, both present and prospective. There is no occasion for despondency—there is every reason to hope on, hope ever. And so our Christmas salutation to each of the unseen thousands for whom we unwearyingly labor shall be: "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice!"

SUNDAY SCHOOL GLEANINGS.

IT is said of Pericles, the Athenian orator, that before he went out to address the people, he prayed to the gods that nothing might go out of his mouth but what might be to the purpose. The custom of this conscientious heathen might well be a lesson to some un-conscientious Christian teachers.——*The Standard* calls for skilled teachers in Sunday-schools, and declares: "Better a builder pick up laborers at random, better a general commit important commands to untested officers, better any important and difficult work of only temporary interest be given into the charge of those whose capacity for executing it is unknown, than that the far-reaching influence of the Sunday-school teacher be allowed in the hands of unskilled workers." Now that paper has lifted up a standard which we will gladly follow.——Mr. Spurgeon affirms that of the hundreds of children received into his church, he has not had a single case of discipline among them all. But the adults never will cease to bother him.——Many people seem to have an idea that so much attention as is now given to methods of work will interfere with true spirituality. That idea was lately cleverly demolished by the leader of an institute, who rather ironically said that it could not be true, "unless there is some superior sanctity in slovenliness." The *Sunday*

School Times adds, somewhat in the same vein: "Certainly no man gains in spirituality by merely doing his work in an unmethodical, shiftless manner. The best way is as good as any." The thing which really is "interfered" with is not spirituality, but—laziness. That is what actually makes the splutter.——We also quote from that paper this sententious opinion: "The best of times for a Sunday-school is in the winter. The best of times for a Sunday-school vacation is —between Sundays." So far as the children are concerned, there are no snow-drifts nor cold that will keep them away. The difficulty is to make these obstacles appear less formidable to the teachers. If we should substitute a sleigh-ride for the Sunday-school, perhaps they might be induced to come out. Cold in the heart is much more destructive to the winter Sunday-school than colds in the head.———Finer and finer is the point being whittled down. At the meeting of the Sunday School Union of the Reformed Churches of Philadelphia, one of the questions discussed was: "In what tone should a Sunday-school be addressed?" Sure enough. That is a thing we had never thought of. Shall it be in the tone ministerial or the tone theatrical, the tone conversational or the tone declamatory, the tone lugubrious or the tone sunny, the tone despairing or the tone hopeful, and should it be on high F or low G? And, while we are about it, what sort of gestures would be suitable, and what is the style of dress *en regle* for winter addresses?———John Roberts, of London, who died not long since, and who for fifty-one years had been a teacher in the Sabbath-school, exhibited on his death-bed the spirit that characterizes every true teacher, and, at the same time, showed the secret of his wonderful success. Said he to one of his old pupils who had come to visit him: "*I have lived for my scholars.*" "And that," he added, "is what a man must do who takes up such a work." He took up the Sunday-school work not as a light, incidental labor that could be taken up or discontinued at pleasure. That to him was his main work, and all else was incidental. And, in the light of eternity, who will say that all business will not seem a very small thing beside the greater work of leading half-a-dozen little ones to the Saviour?——— The *Standard* thinks it has discovered the system that is usually adopted in classifying Sunday-schools. It has come to the conclusion that it is a mere matter of avoirdupois, and, taking five hundred pounds as the standard average weight of a class, it gives the following method of determining the number that should be in it: "If the pupils weigh one hundred pounds a piece, five are necessary. If fifty pounds, ten are required; if twenty-five, twenty; if ten, fifty; and so on." It is laboriously trying to figure out some consistent reason for making the infant classes so large.

Sunday School Work.

Dr. John Hall has commended the Sabbath-schools in North Wales as being the best he ever saw. They are composed, practically, of the same people that the minister has for an audience. They rotate with regard to the teachers, the scholar of to-day being himself the teacher of the coming Sabbath, and, sometimes, all the classes are resolved into one great class, at which time any one, either teacher or scholar, can propound a question to the whole school, and get an answer. Dr. Hall says that it was intensely interesting when one had proposed a question, say about experimental religion, to note the thoughtful silence, and then the deep attention that would be manifest when the answer was being given.———Edward Kimball, the Sabbath-school teacher under whom

Mr. Moody was converted, is a manufacturer of furniture, and is also a "lay-preacher," in an unpretending way. Not long since he went to San Francisco to establish a branch factory. He found a church in the suburbs that had a vacant pulpit and a discouraged membership. He went to holding meetings in it, at the request of the elders, and the result was that a marked revival followed his efforts. Many another plain business man could do a similar work without injuring his business or hurting his Christian experience.——It is estimated that over 1,500 persons assembled at the first session of the Normal class in Brooklyn, under the lead of Dr. Vincent. And, so far, the attendance does not seem interfered with by the revival there, while one of the good results of it ought to be to increase the numbers.——The trustees of Ocean Grove have put their beautiful grounds at the disposal of the New Jersey Sunday School Association, to be made over into another Chautauqua. One of the attractions, of course, is to be a "Palestine Park," a thousand feet in length. Pretty soon no State will be satisfied unless it rivals or outdoes Vincent's Lake assembly.——Hon. W. E. Dodge commenced his service in the Sunday-school under Lemuel Brewster, who had charge of a school over a livery stable, corner of Broad and Stone streets, New York. He asked for a class, but was told: "Young man, there is a bench, but you must get your class yourself." It took him two Sundays to do that, and though that was forty years ago, he has not taken off the harness yet.——The Congregational Association of California is so far favorable to giving the Sunday-school the place of one of the preaching services, and so make a Bible school out of it, that a committee was appointed to report next year on the desirability and the practicability of the change.——Last month we placed Rev. J. B. Atchison in the editorial chair of the *Michigan Christian Advocate*. As that was already occupied by two editors, he wants us, for their comfort, we presume, to take him off, and set him down in the one where he belongs, which is the Sunday-school chair of that paper. We do so. And now we hope there will be peace in that sanctum.——The Brooklyn Sunday School Union has started a monthly paper, which is called *The Brooklyn Sunday School*. Its object is to bring the Sunday-school people of that city into a closer relationship, and make common property of all their helpful experiences. Sketches of its church and mission schools will form one of its attractions.——That Plainfield Normal class laid itself out for a "Week of Work," commencing Oct. 31. All the pastors of the place were invited to inaugurate the exercises by preaching on Bible study on the Sabbath. During the week there were addresses from prominent men on relevant topics, mothers' meetings, "receptions" for primary and intermediate class teachers, and normal classes, etc. They have Sunday-school on the brain at Plainfield.——The advent of Sunday-schools along the Cape Fear shore in North Carolina has caused quite a change in the matter of observing the Sabbath. Before, it was a sort of general fishing holiday, but now an old colored woman says of the reform that has taken place: "Yes, massa, de tide now fall, and de crab he crawl; he don't run no more like he did, for to get away from de boys of Sunday."

The Teachers' Meeting.

[Being a social gathering where our friends can ask questions, furnish condensations of thought and experience, and give hints about Sabbath-school work. Write for it.]

—A correspondent wants some rather knotty questions answered, and suggests that such discussions would increase for him the interest of this department.

Perhaps there are others of the same mind. If so, all that they have to do is to ask the questions that they want an opinion upon. We *could* follow the example of some of our contemporaries and have quite a lively Question Drawer —by inventing our own questions! But while we have admired the fertility of invention, which, week after week and month after month could produce so many new queries—or disguise old ones in new dresses—we have preferred to talk to real instead of imaginary needs. Some of the "questions" which are thus answered in our exchanges look as if the answers were born first, and as if the questions were so many men of straw set up to show how cleverly they can be knocked down.

—How shall we get that incorrigible boy or girl to study?

"Incorrigible" means bad beyond all hope of amendment. If a child has come to that pass of course nothing can be done for it. But is any girl or boy really incorrigible? It has been our fate mostly to teach what are termed "the bad boys." And we never yet have found one that was unreachable. If you have an "incorrigible" boy study him as an engineer would study a fort that he was commanded to take. It pays to examine a boy's character thoroughly before you make any attempt to capture him, the same as it does to learn the defences of a fortress, before any charge is made on it. Many an army has been driven back, baffled and defeated, because the general ordered a charge without thoroughly reconnoitering the place to be taken. And a boy's heart, like many another fortification, always has some avenue of approach to it, which, if you can find it, will enable you to walk right in and be the welcome master of its garrison. Our answer to the question, then, is: first conquer your "incorrigible" boy, and then help him to study, show him how to study, visiting him for that purpose, and give him questions to hunt out the answers to which he would feel a special interest in knowing. The old recipe for cooking a hare began: "First catch your hare"—and then the rest was easy.

—Would any superintendent introduce such subjects as "Methods of Conducting a Library," or "The Blackboard with relation to Beauty" in any real teachers' meeting?

The point of that interrogation is stuck at us. Those are subjects which were touched upon in this department in the last number of this magazine. First, to answer the question squarely, we say, Yes. We could name some prominent Sunday-school men, whom our friend would unhesitatingly recognize as authorities on such matters who do just such things. Second, a teachers' meeting is not only for the purpose of studying the lesson or learning how to teach it, or how to deal with unruly scholars, but to talk over all the needs of a school. He is a very unwise superintendent who would introduce a library system without consulting with his teachers, or even buy a blackboard without having their opinion upon it. By conferring with them he will not only be likely to learn something to his advantage, but will make the school keep even pace with himself, instead of being away ahead of it, and will make the "one-man power" less evident.

—How shall we get the children to sing with the understanding as well as "spirit"?

They never can sing with the spirit until they do sing with the understanding. They can sing spiritedly, but not with "the spirit." To make them sing with the "understanding"—read the hymns, commenting, if need be, on their meaning. Select those songs that bear upon the subject of the lesson—then there will be a purpose in the singing that will help to give it a true spirit. And, finally, make the exercise a worship. Don't let the sexton think it is the best time, just then, to poke the fire, or the librarian suppose that it is his opportunity to gather up the books.

Literature.

Most biographies, especially of living men, are inflictions on the patience and temper of those to whom the persons sketched are known. They are usually the driest and most indigestible collection of facts — facts with the juice and the flavor carefully dried out of them, like apples when *they* are quartered and strung for preservation! The result is that biographies of existing men, no matter how popular they may be, are given the cold shoulder. People prefer the man himself to any biographical caricature of him, and his present deeds to any unvitalized account of his former ones. They can not see the man they admire in these narrations any more than they could see him in the collapsed, limp clothing that he used to wear. Mr. Moody is in a fair way to have many such exhibitors of his cast off deeds. Some of the "lives" that already have been put upon the market are poor representations of the man and his work. In one, however, both have received a faithful portraiture. In the volume just issued, *D. L. Moody and his Work*, the facile pen of our friend and contributor, Rev. W. H. Daniels, has given us most a life-like sketch of the great evangelist. The work is most warmly, enthusiastically, and—faithfully done. In perusing its pages we are not reading about Mr. Moody so much as actually beholding him. The author has succeeded just where so many people fail — he has given us the man *and* his work instead of the work without the man. The volume is divided into two parts, the last of which takes up Mr. Moody's work on the other side of the water, and the first the previous experiences on this, which fitted him for it. It contains pretty good portraits both of him and Mr. Sankey, and illustrations of places of interest both in America and England rendered famous by his presence or his work. Hartford: American Publishing Co.

Every Day Facts for Every Day Life is a compendium of useful information on all sorts of subjects. In it one can learn how to cook almost any dish, cure almost any disease, treat almost any accident, gives information in regard to physiology, clothing, chemistry for the household, house decoration, drinks, food, fruit, furniture, gardening, houses, children, law, the toilet, stationery, and "miscellaneous" matters! One ought not to go to bed without it. Seriously, though, the information is really useful, and the book a handy resort in many an emergency. New York: Dodd & Mead. Chicago: W. G. Holmes. $1.50.

The "helps" for 1876 are already putting in an appearance. *Select Notes* on the lessons for the coming year, by Rev. E. N. Peloubet, are among the first. As their title indicates, they do not claim to be original, but are well chosen excerpts from the comments of the best expositors. To those who have no theological library nor means to obtain one, this is one "boiled down," involves less labor in searching, and is quite inexpensive. Every such compendium, however, has its drawbacks. In selecting from so wide a range of authors, it is impossible always to get comments that accord with the latest scholarly research, and the temptation is to select the striking thoughts rather than the reliable expositions. Chicago: John Fairbanks & Co. $1.25.

The same house issue, also, a very handy little *Pronouncing Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names*, in pamphlet form with cloth covers. If the teacher always had this convenient help about him, we would not hear such a slaughtering of Scripture proper names as we now often do. 25c.

We are glad to note the constant improvement in Sabbath-school song books. The American Tract Society, increasingly careful to put its imprint only on good things, will not be likely to suffer in its reputation by becoming sponsor for *Royal Songs*, by J. W. Sufferu and W. W. Bentley. The hymns are exceptionally good, and the music choice, the name of S. J. Vail appearing rather frequently on its pages.

Bigelow & Main (New York) have also issued a new Sabbath-school song book which, if we mistake not, will have a run. It is christened the *Book of Praise*, and is just such a selection from the best song books as one would like to make for himself. Sterling hymns and tunes keep company on its pages, and show the excellent judgment of that practical Sunday-school man, Geo. A. Bell. It has many more hymns than tunes, and makes the mistake of putting in those unadapted to any music in the book itself, and citing the pages of the numerous books out of which they were taken for the tunes to which they should be sung. Hence, to sing these divorced hymns one must have a large musical library, and so they are practically useless, except where they are very familiar—and then the citation is unnecessary. But the quality of the book in a measure atones for this.

A very good, time-saving help to the librarian is *Henderson's S. S. Library Record*. It is gotten up on the sensible principle (for the library) that it is the book that should be kept track of and not the scholar. Hence the record shows at a glance where the book is. Opposite the number of the book, and under the proper date, is put the number of the scholar who has it. Very simple — hence very good. Chicago: John Fairbanks & Co. $1.25.

What our Friends Think and Say.

—Office of—

THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER,

Chicago, November, 1875.

It is a great gratification to us to be able to print letters so warmly commendatory as the following. As will be seen, many of them are from men well known and honored, and they show the high standing that The Teacher has taken and holds. Our friends may rest assured that no pains will be spared, either on the part of the publishers or the editor, to increase the excellence of a magazine which is already so satisfactory. The plans for the coming year contemplate improvements to be introduced, like those of this year, at intervals throughout the year—whenever it is possible to make them. Some are already decided upon, others will be adopted as soon as it is apparent that they are really useful. We mean that our friends shall have in The Teacher a sense of constant growth. If, now, all who are interested in it will do what they conveniently can to increase its circulation, we shall be able to add some things now out of our power.

Adams, Blackmer, & Lyon Pub. Co.

In all its departments The Teacher is one of the very best Sunday-school publications in the world. Its lessons, especially, are worthy of the highest commendation.

(Gen.) Clinton B. Fisk,
New York.

The Teacher has been steadily improving, and our school have been delighted with it. At our teachers' meetings that stands far ahead of all other Sunday-school publications.

(Rev.) Lewellyn Pratt,
North Adams, Mass.

Your journal is more a *teacher* than any other with which I am acquainted. Its lessons are full, judicious, and practical; and the articles on related topics first-class, as the names of the writers guaranty. Nor do I ever "skip the fine print." I read it all with interest. The miscellaneous and current items are always capital. I have nothing but commendation.

(Prof.) E. Olney.
Mich. University, Ann Arbor.

The variety and thoroughness of discussion which mark the contributions to The National Sunday School Teacher are very noteworthy. Those engaged in the work of Sunday-school instruction are greatly in your debt for papers so rich in matter and attractive in form. The editorial management has been beyond all praise. Such aptness, skill, and fertility of resources I do not recall in any such magazine. In the treatment of the lessons, looking to the object in view, viz., the drawing forth naturally and legitimately from the inspired text of as full and rich instruction on divine things as possible—without fanciful and unwarranted interpretation—and this in form most readily available for the class instructor, and suggestive of independent and profitable thought, application, and enforcement, I can hardly see what more could be added. No aspect of the truth inculcated in the text seems to be overlooked.

(Pres.) Geo. F. Magoun,
Iowa College, Grinnell.

I have never had nor expressed but one opinion of The Teacher. In every respect it is worthy of the exalted position it has obtained among Sunday-school periodicals and in the hearts of Sunday-school workers. I recommend it wherever I go. The lessons, by Mr. Hazard,

are not excelled by any that come to my office, and I have six or eight other papers with which to compare them.

Altogether I do not see how you could make many improvements in THE TEACHER.

F. M. GREEN.
Akron, O.

I believe it to be the general opinion that THE TEACHER was never more practical, helpful, and satisfactory than at present. I have never yet had the pleasure of meeting your editor, but I desire to congratulate him upon his conspicuous success in making all the departments of THE TEACHER so pithy, so lively, and so profitable.

C. B. STOUT.
New Brunswick, N. J.

Were I limited to the perusal of but one exposition of the lessons, of all that I am acquainted with I should unhesitatingly select THE TEACHER.

LOGAN H. ROOTS,
Little Rock, Ark.

I have examined with some care the adult lessons in THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER for the last three numbers. They seem to me to be admirably adapted to their purpose, and to constitute an invaluable aid to Sunday-school workers.

(Rev.) LYMAN ABBOTT,
New York.

THE TEACHER was never more valuable in its lesson helps than under its present editorship.

(Bishop) CHAS. EWD. CHENEY,
Chicago, Ill.

THE TEACHER as a whole is a gain in every department upon an ordinary Sunday-school workers' ideal. It combines spice and substance, learning and fervor, thoroughness and sprightliness; so as to be worthy of all confidence and fascinating to all readers. How you are to better it much without lifting it out of its design I do not understand.

(Rev.) W. A. BARTLETT.
Chicago, Ill.

It would be difficult for me to express the admiration that I have felt for THE TEACHER of 1875 without seeming to be extravagant. Its contributed articles, its lesson notes and questions, its practical applications and Scripture references, its skillful reviews, its simple blackboards, and its fresh, newsy paragraphs, are all up to a high standard of excellence, and it is hard to see how it can be excelled in any department.

JOHN B. SMITH, Hartford, Ct.

Of all the "helps" to the study of the International Lessons there are none that I prize more highly than those prepared by Mr. Hazard, for THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER. I never take them up without finding something good which I could not find elsewhere. Besides, he makes the Bible speak, and unfolds the truths in the light of the sacred text itself, always, as it seems to me, hiding his own theories and speculations behind the simple Word of God.

R. H. GRIFFITH,
Rushville, Ill.

The contributions are most interesting and of great value to Sunday-school teachers, and all Bible students. Gotten up with such care and ability they must win a choice place in the hearts of all. The lessons, so classified, and comments so arranged as to bring the best thoughts of all earnest, anxious teachers to the fore-front of the great truths to be presented to the minds of the scholars. The editorial management—*how can it be better!*

J. E. LEWIS,
Supt. Ref. Church S. S.,
South Bend, Ind.

I consider THE NATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER as ably conducted in all respects—a leader in the good work of Bible instruction.

(Pres.) P. A. CHADBOURNE,
Williams College.

The contributions are well—some, able. The editorial seems to me *very* well managed, but the great excellence

is in the lesson department. I have every week some fourteen expositions of the lesson, but none which meets the want of the teacher like Mr. Hazard's. Many are greatly *geographical*—others are merely *narrative*—some *speculative*, but THE TEACHER has evidently aimed at the exact *thought* in the mind of the writer and to follow it like a line of light. And it becomes luminous along this track. The power lies, not in the *exposition*, but in the *truth* exposed. As a whole, I heartily approve THE TEACHER, and could better do without all the rest than it.

O. J. HARMON,
Oswego, N. Y.

DEAR SIR—I regard THE TEACHER for the year 1875 superior to anything of the kind published. I was a subscriber to its second year, and have given, since that time, a careful investigation to several similar publications, and have yet to find a periodical equal to it.

J. Q. A. PERRIN,
Lafayette Ind.

We don't well see how you could improve THE TEACHER. We thought so last year, yet it has been improved wonderfully, and become an indispensable "help." Practical thoughts and suggestions are what are needed in preparing lessons (something the teacher can *build* upon). We like our other helps much, but THE TEACHER better. Articles upon the subject of the lessons are a good feature—*more* of *that* and *less* theorizing on the "how" to run a Sunday-school, by the Rev. Prof. Somebody, who never tried his hands at it. Superintendents and teachers will work out the "how," only give them food for thought and stimulate them to action.

ROLAND T. OAKES,
Supt. 3d Cong. S. S., Chicopee, Mass.

I consider THE TEACHER the best periodical of the kind ever published. The contributions and editorials have a freshness and vigor that render them ever readable, instructive and interesting. The notes, comments, and explanations in THE TEACHER leave nothing to be desired. They are full and complete. THE TEACHER, as a whole, is indeed and in truth a *teacher*. As such it meets my hearty approval, and I shall use all my influence to extend its circulation and usefulness in the state.

W. G. WHIDBY,
Pres't State S. S. Conv., Atlanta, Ga.

I regard THE TEACHER as far superior to all other "helps" on the lesson. The leading articles contributed by our greatest theologians make it a *choice little book of gems*, from which both teacher and pupil may cull the richest, brightest and most noble thoughts contained in the lesson. The "Notes and Comments" are brilliant, powerful and lucid, worthy of the editor. Its every department is marked with care and sterling thought.

WM. M. RULE,
Central City, Col.

The three departments are good—good—good; THE TEACHER as a whole, very good. I see publications which seem to me poor helps compared with yours.

C. O. FARRINGTON,
Brewer, Me.

In my long Sunday-school connection I have had occasion to examine a variety of question books and papers, commentaries, etc., etc., and it gives me sincere pleasure to testify to the superiority of your SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER and Lesson Papers to all other kindred works that I have seen. THE TEACHER is a lucid and comprehensive commentary on the lessons, and its reading matter, free from sensationalism and sectarianism, is interesting, instructive, and spiritually healthful. The questions are *sensible*, suggestive, and for the most part, well arranged, and it would be simply a deprivation to me to exchange them for any help of the kind that I am acquainted with.

C. F. A. JOHNSON,
Supt. Cong. S. S.,
Presque Isle, Me.

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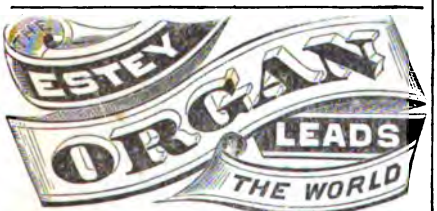

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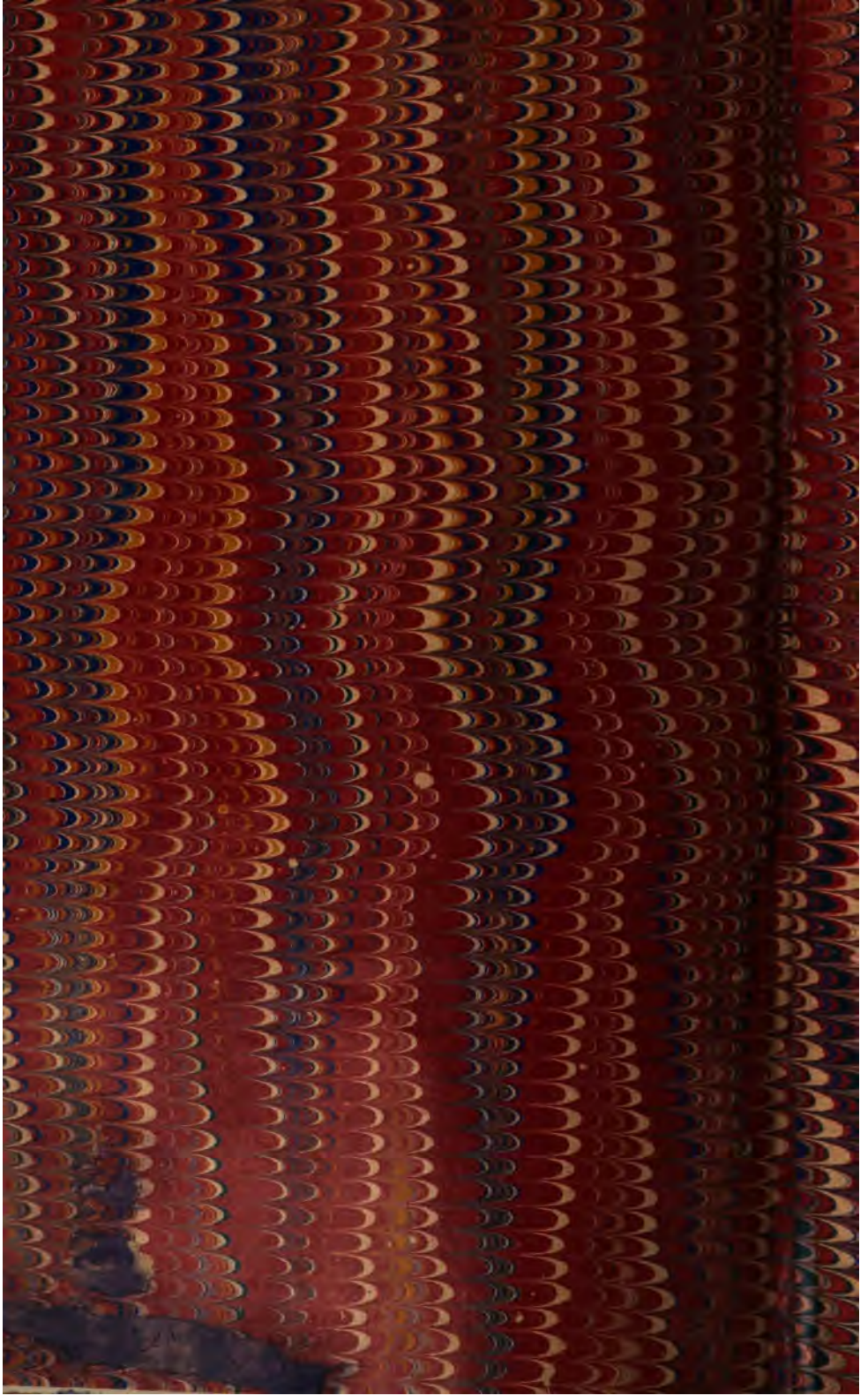

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